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WEST SIDE STUDIES

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THE MIDDLE WEST SIDE

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

By OTHO G. CARTWRIGHT

—

MOTHERS WHO MUST EARN

By KATHARINE ANTHONY

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PREFACE TO WEST SIDE STUDIES

IN the summer of 1912 the field work was completed for the West Side studies published in these volumes. They are part of a wider survey of the neighborhood which it was proposed to make under the Bureau of Social Research of the New York School of Philanthropy with funds supplied by the Russell Sage Foundation. Dr. Samuel McCune Lindsay, director of the School, and I were in charge of the Bureau and together planned the scope and nature of the inquiry. To his inspiriting influence was due in large measure the enthusiasm and harmonious work of our staff.

The investigators in the Bureau were men and women who had been awarded fellowships by the School of Philanthropy. There were junior fellowships, given for one year only, and intended to provide training in social research for students without much previous experience, who were required to give part of their time to class work and special reading. There were also senior fellowships given to more advanced students who devoted full time to investigation. After two years' work it was felt that to carry out the original plan satisfactorily would require the employment of a permanent staff of investigators who were well trained and equipped. The School, therefore, decided not to carry the survey further and reorganized the Bureau on a different basis.

This brief account of the Bureau is needed to explain the special topics dealt with in these volumes. The personal qualifications of the investigators as well as the available opportunities for investigation necessarily determined the choice of subjects.

A word must be said, too, as to the selection of this particular West Side district of New York City. These 80 blocks which border upon the Hudson River, between Thirty-fourth and Fifty-fourth Streets, contrast sharply with almost all other tenement neighborhoods of the city. They have as nearly homogeneous and stable a population as can be found in any part of New York. The original stock was Irish and German. In each generation the bolder spirits moved away to more prosperous parts of the city. This left behind the less ambitious and in many cases the wrecks of the population. Hence in this "backset" from the main current of the city's life may be seen some of the most acute social problems of modern urban life—not the readjustment and amalgamation of sturdy immigrant groups, but the discouragement and deterioration of an indigenous American community.

The quarter which we studied is strangely detached from the rest of the city. Only occasionally an outbreak of lawlessness brings it to public notice. Its old reputation for violence and crime dates back many generations and persists to the present day. So true is this that we considered it essential at the beginning of our undertaking to ascertain the main facts of the district's development. To Otho G. Cartwright was assigned the task of collecting this material. He did not make an exhaustive inquiry, but obtained from reliable sources sufficient information to give the his-

torical background of life in the district today. His work serves as a general introduction to the more intensive studies which follow.

The study of juvenile delinquency, Boyhood and Lawlessness, shows clearly the need of special intimate knowledge of social phenomena if their underlying causes are to be understood. It describes the inadequacies of the present system: the innumerable arrests for petty offenses or for playing in the streets, and the failure of the police to bring the ringleaders into court. All this seems so unreasonable to the neighborhood and has so often aroused its antagonism that the influence of the Children's Court is seriously undermined. In fact, the fathers and mothers of its charges look upon it only as a hostile authority in league with the police, while its real purpose is entirely hidden from them. The evidence is clear, too, that both parents and community have failed to understand and provide for the most elementary physical needs of the boys.

The same tragic lack of opportunity and care characterizes the lives of the girls. Ruth S. True's portrayal of these lives in The Neglected Girl rests upon close personal acquaintance with a special group of girls who, though they were not brought up on charges in the Children's Court, yet were without question in grave need of probationary care.

In neither of these two studies was it possible to suggest adequate remedies for the evils described. It is true that steps have already been taken by the Children's Court to make its probation staff more effective. But the more fundamental need for modification of the conditions of the child's life and environ-

ment has still to be pondered. Clearly it is not the child alone who needs reformation.

Similarly, Katharine Anthony's report, Mothers Who Must Earn, reveals much more than isolated cases of hardship and suffering due to accident or death. She has studied the social and economic causes which compel the mother of a family to become a wage-earner, and the consequences of such employment for her home and family. The occupations where her services are in demand were carefully examined. The underpayment of many of the husbands, which drives their already overburdened wives into wage-earning, is perhaps the most significant fact disclosed. To relieve such severe economic pressure there is certainly need of more radical and far-reaching readjustments than can be effected by any one remedial measure. Relief giving is at best only a temporary stop-gap. This is rather a labor problem of the utmost gravity, affecting whole classes of underpaid laborers.

Indeed, if there is any one truth which emerges from these studies, it is the futility of dealing with social maladjustments as single isolated problems. They are all closely interrelated, and the first step in getting order out of our complexities must be knowledge of what exists. To such knowledge these studies aim to make a contribution. They are not intended to prove preconceived ideas nor to test the efficacy of any special remedies. They aim to describe with sympathy and insight some of the real needs of a neglected quarter of our city—"to hold, as it were, the mirror up to nature."

The various investigators who took part in the inquiry are given herewith: Edward M. Barrows, Clin-

ton S. Childs, Eleanor H. Adler, Beatrice Sheets, and Ruth S. True contributed to the study of the West Side boy, here published under the title Boyhood and Lawlessness. Thomas D. Eliot, a junior fellow, also assisted. Associated with Ruth S. True in the study of the neglected girl, were Ann Campion and Dorothy Kirchwey. All three shared the responsibility of conducting the Tenth Avenue club for the observation of the girls described in their report. The volume Mothers Who Must Earn is the result of work done by Katharine Anthony, who was assisted in her field work by Ruth S. Waldo, a junior fellow.*

In the fall of 1912 practically the whole staff at that time employed devoted two months' time to inspection of the industrial establishments of the district, under authority of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission. The results were published as Appendix V, to Volume I, of the Commission's P eliminary Report, 1912.

Thanks are due to many persons who gave unstintedly of their time to the various investigators. Our indebtedness is especially great to the staff of the Clinton District office of the Charity Organization Society, who brought us in touch with many families in their care, and through their varied experience helped us in interpreting many aspects of neighborhood life. Among

* Mention should also be made of other fellows of the Bureau whose work in connection with the West Side Survey is not included in these publications. They were Elizabeth B. Butler, senior fellow; Lawrence K. Frank, Robert C. Sanger, Garret P. Wyckoff, Howard Nudd, Marie S. Orenstein, and Frances Perkins, all junior fellows. The last three published the results of their investigations in magazine articles.

other agencies, Hartley House was particularly generous in making us acquainted with its Italian neighbors and in giving us the opportunity to visit them in their homes. The teachers of various local schools should also be mentioned with appreciation for the help they gave us in many ways.

PAULINE GOLDMARK.

The Middle West Side, New York City

Panoramic view taken from the roof of the Scribner Press Building, West Forty-third Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues

Panoramic view taken from the roof of the Scholler Press Building, West Perry

RUSSELL SAGE
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THE MIDDLE WEST SIDE

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

BY

OTHO G. CARTWRIGHT

WEST SIDE STUDIES

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THE LENNERT MANSION

I

INTRODUCTORY

THE aim of this study is to give a brief account of the chief historical elements which had gone into the making of the Middle West Side as it was when in 1910 the Bureau of Social Research began its series of studies of the neighborhood. A historical sketch was deemed the necessary first step in establishing an acquaintance with the district. Hence the collection of the material in the following pages was undertaken at a very early stage of the work of the Bureau and was soon brought to a close. This was necessary in order that the results might be formulated and made available for the workers who were to carry on the special studies within the district.

This review was therefore a preliminary piece of work and no attempt was made to render it exhaustive. Its original intention was to introduce a group of social investigators to their field of work. It is given here with the hope that it may introduce a wider circle of the public to the neglected and little-known Middle West Side.

Where Children Play

De Witt Clinton Park

Eleventh Avenue between Fifty-second and Fifty-fourth Streets

the five avenues—Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth—and Thirty-fourth and Forty-second Streets, are each 100 feet wide. Twelfth Avenue, where it is completed, has an additional western extension of 150 feet of bulkhead toward the Hudson River for the temporary handling of cargoes and for other waterfront purposes, which in some places gives the avenue a total width of 250 feet west of the building line.

Throughout the length and breadth of this area there is scarcely a blade of grass to reward a diligent search. Except for De Witt Clinton Park and Playground, which has recently been carved, at great expense, out of a dirty brick desert and a wilderness of dump-heaps, the 80 blocks of our district, exceeding in total population the capital of the state of New York, would be without an open space except for the streets, and without a shade tree. Indeed, with the exception of some irregular open spaces below Fourteenth Street the entire west side of Manhattan from Seventy-second Street to the Battery is arid, desolate, and in places smoke stained.

The district is littered with refuse and is the last in the city to receive the attention of the street cleaning department. In winter after a storm the side streets are neglected until the snow melts and the removal of the collected refuse is thus facilitated. This neglect grows worse as one walks westward, certain cross streets from Eleventh Avenue to the river being left entirely untouched by the street cleaners all winter long.

From an architectural standpoint the district has neither salient features nor real uniformity. The lack of a proper building plan partly explains the general appearance of disorder.

As a rule the streets are free from overshadowing skyscrapers, the residences and tenements being about five stories in height, while the business houses alone reach a greater altitude. The tenements are mostly of the "dumb-bell" or "railroad" type, and were nearly all built before the reform law of 1901. Fifty-seven of the 80 blocks studied contain 2,500 tenement houses, with an average, therefore, of 44 tenements to the block; some, however, have as many as 60.

The factory district may be divided roughly at Forty-second Street. South of that line, manufacturing establishments occupy the blocks west of Tenth Avenue to the river; north of Forty-second Street these establishments are rather generally confined to the blocks west of Eleventh Avenue. The blocks along the river are occupied mainly by manufacturing establishments, stables, and warehouses.

Between Tenth and Twelfth Avenues, Thirty-fourth and Forty-second Streets, are 16 of the most neglected blocks of the district. Four are taken up with the freight tracks and sheds of the New York Central and the West Shore railroads; three with slaughter houses and fat-rendering establishments; two by the Consolidated Gas Company; and seven by an indiscriminate mixture of factories and tenements. The locality is pervaded by malodorous fumes from the slaughter houses and gas works, so intense at times as to be almost suffocating.

While the region is not marked by such overcrowding of buildings as are certain other portions of Manhattan, there is congestion of population in some sections. Within its area there lived, in 1910, about 110,000 persons. The average density of population for the

Pennsylvania Railroad Yards
West Thirty-seventh Street

West Thirty-seventh Street
Looking Toward Eleventh Avenue and Railroad Yards

whole district was therefore about 275 persons per acre; but as many blocks in addition to the two given up to the park are, as we have noted, occupied solely or largely by manufacturing establishments, by railroad tracks and sheds, the density was in some places much higher than these figures indicate. The distribution of the population by blocks is shown in the table and chart on the following pages. The table shows population per block, while the diagram shows population per acre.

More than half of the blocks were inhabited by at least 1,500 people. Three contained over 3,000 and four between 2,500 and 3,000. On the other hand, eight blocks were without population in 1910, and 10 others had a combined population of less than 4,000. These blocks with their small population bordered on the North River, or were situated in the southwest corner of the district. Ten blocks, including those occupied by De Witt Clinton Park, were without inhabitants in 1910.

The worst of the district, however, is not its congested sections, nor perhaps the dingy and noxious nature of certain of its industries, but the sordid, deadly monotony and lack of picturesque life. There are many quarters in the city touched by a spirit of old-world romance; the neighborhoods, for instance, inhabited by groups of Italians, French, Jews, and Chinese, who retain their familiar languages and customs in the midst of new and strange conditions. But no hint of quaintness or color relieves this region of slaughter houses, railway sheds, gas tanks, and piano factories. The West Side contains elements of many racial groups,*

* See Chapter VI, Character of the Population, p. 45.

POPULATION OF THE WEST SIDE DISTRICT BOUNDED BY WEST 54TH STREET, EIGHTH AVENUE, WEST 34TH STREET AND THE NORTH RIVER, BY BLOCKS. 1910[a]

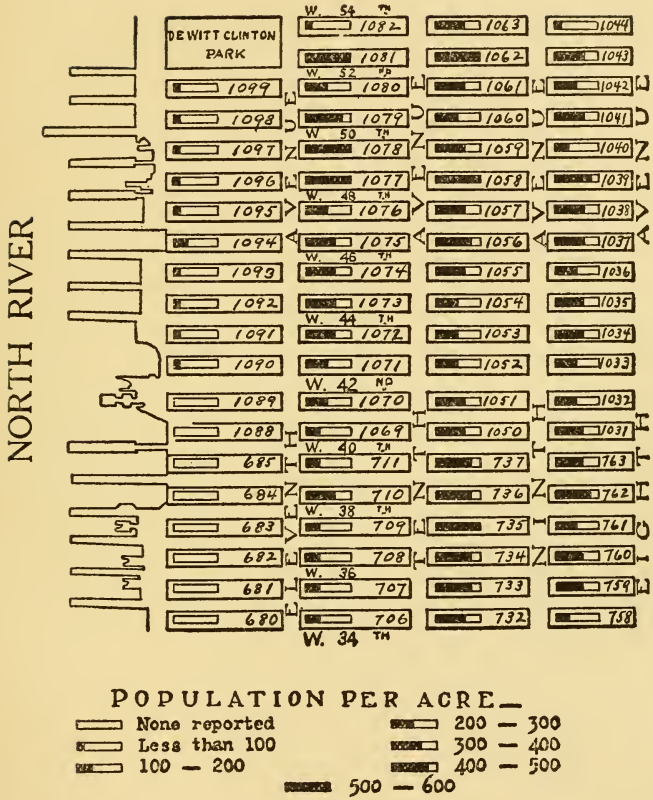
(The block numbers used are from the Official List of the Assessors of New York City. The blocks may be identified by reference to the accompanying chart. Of the 80 blocks comprised in the district, two, occupied by De Witt Clinton Park, are not included in the table.)

Block number	Population in 1910	Block number	Population in 1910	Block number	Population in 1910
1,044	528	1,055	2,122	709	983
1,043	1,667	1,054	1,585	708	776
1,042	1,443	1,053	1,432	707	738
1,041	1,757	1,052	1,317	706	694
1,040	651	1,051	1,834	1,099	1,093[c]
1,039	2,267	1,050	2,038	1,098	
1,038	1,644	737	2,529	1,097	
1,037	1,859	736	2,275	1,096	1,002
1,036	1,351	735	2,790	1,095	
1,035	2,027	734	2,385	1,094	694
1,034	1,705	733	2,339	1,093	
1,033	1,297	732	2,088	1,092	1,020
1,032	1,263	1,082	....[b]	1,091	
1,031	2,122	1,081	2,783	1,090	
763	1,954	1,080	1,508	1,089	....
762	2,154	1,079	2,343	1,088	....
761	1,438	1,078	2,857	685	....
760	1,990	1,077	3,207	684	....
759	1,775	1,076	1,492	683	....
758	890	1,075	2,102	682	....
1,063	2,010	1,074	1,857	681	....
1,062	3,137	1,073	1,930	680	....
1,061	1,727	1,072	1,895	Total . .	110,142
1,060	1,537	1,071	1,703		
1,059	1,803	1,070	1,646		
1,058	3,063	1,069	863		
1,057	2,110	711	757		
1,056	2,381	710	1,915		

[a] Compiled from a bulletin of the Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, entitled Population: New York City: number of Inhabitants by Enumeration Districts.

[b] Combined with blocks number 1,099 and number 1,098.

[c] Includes block number 1,082.



POPULATION PER ACRE—

- None reported
- Less than 100
- 100 — 200
- 200 — 300
- 300 — 400
- 400 — 500
- 500 — 600

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN THE MIDDLE WEST SIDE DISTRICT

but so jumbled, unclassified, and unassorted as to be wholly without picturesque suggestion. Only the Negroes, who perforce dwell apart from the whites, form a distinct quarter and retain a distinct social life.

One of the most distinguishing features is its saloons with their clientèle. There are 200 in the district. Loafers congregate on their thresholds or lounge about the docks all day. The petty traffic of little stores fills the avenues, and the cross streets echo with the intercourse of tenement neighbors. After school hours the sidewalks and streets swarm with children who have no other playground, and later in the day, at the shriek of a factory whistle, the wage-earners,—men, women, boys, and girls,—pour out upon the street in a continuous hurrying stream. On Eleventh Avenue, the cumbersome freight trains of the New York Central lumber along the surface tracks all day and most of the night, marking their course with serious and sometimes fatal accidents to the dwellers of the neighborhood. Only in summer, up in the children's gardens in De Witt Clinton Park, is there a touch of green and bloom and the usufruct of the earth, which for so many years were the right and heritage of the district.

III

FROM FOREST LAND TO CITY LOTS

THREE centuries of white men's abode have produced the conditions described. The original ground was a forest, about two-thirds of a square mile in area, containing intervals of open glade and masses of deep underbrush. Indian trails led through it and fields of maize and the smoke from Indian tepees gave a touch of human life. From the center of the island the general slope of the land was westward to the Hudson, with here and there an outcropping of high rocks sometimes 30 feet or more above the soil. The highest point above mean high water mark was not more than 70 feet.* A few miniature lakes marked the landscape and several small streams traversed the western portion of the district. The largest stream of fresh water in the vicinity was known by the Dutch after they took possession as the "Great Kill." Flowing from a small lake at the west side of the present Sixth Avenue, between Forty-eighth and Forty-ninth Streets, the Kill followed first a southerly and then a westerly direction, emptying into the Hudson at Forty-second Street. The lower southwestern part of the district was flat and the mouth of the stream was surrounded by a swamp. This swamp was long un-

* Topographical Maps, Department of Public Works, Manhattan.

occupied, and when the expanding city reached the empty ground it seemed most suitable for factory buildings, which gradually filled up the space undesirable for residences.

North of the Great Kill, near the present Forty-fourth Street, lay an elevated portion of woodland, where high rocks broke through the surface.* At Forty-ninth Street lay another. South of the Kill, at Thirty-fifth Street, was a third considerable elevation, which in later days was called Strawberry Hill, and various minor ones existed elsewhere, all of which have been levelled away.† In one spot only of the whole district may the original surface of the land be seen to-day. This is in West Fifty-second Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Here two cottages built by German immigrants remain on their original foundations, high above the street level.

Eastward along the whole district lay the higher ground which became fine farm land, and, later still, wealthy estates. For two centuries this land passed from hand to hand through a line of industrious Dutch farmers, who raised abundant crops of corn and garden truck which were marketed in the neighboring city of New York.

The whole locality was known as the Great Kill district,‡ from the stream which was its chief geographical feature, and it formed the lower portion of

* The nature of these rocks, ragged and vertical in stratification, may still be seen on what is called San Juan Hill at Eleventh Avenue and Sixty-fifth Street, where a colony of squatters survived as late as 1909. See illustration opposite p. 23.

† Topographical Maps, Department of Public Works, Manhattan.

‡ Mott, Hopper Stryker: Bloomingdale, The New York of Yesterday. New York, Putnam, 1908.

Old House on Seventh Avenue, 1849

A German Cottage

West Fifty-second Street, showing old level

A Little Dutch Cottage

Columbus Circle, 1866

what was called the Bloomingdale region—a tract of land whose southern boundaries are in doubt but which on the north extended all the way to Washington Heights at what is now One Hundred and Forty-seventh Street.

In the name of this large tract the Dutch settlers had perpetuated their memory of Bloemendael, a suburb of Haarlem noted for its blooming gardens. Irving has pointed out how well suited the Dutch equivalent of a vale of flowers was to the region that bore its name in this country: "A sweet and rural valley, beautified with many a bright wild flower, refreshed by many a pure streamlet, and enlivened here and there by a delectable little Dutch cottage, sheltered under some sloping hill, and almost buried in embowering trees."*

That the tract bore the name of Bloomingdale is shown by the title papers of lands exchanged and sold within its boundaries, by old letters addressed to residents there in an early period, by local names which persisted to the middle of the nineteenth century, and by the old name on the map of the City Plan of 1807, Bloomingdale Square. Further evidence that Bloomingdale was the familiar name of the region is furnished by the following advertisement taken from the *Mercantile Advertiser* of December 10, 1814:

> "To let: for one or more years, the farm at Bloomingdale near the Four Mile Stone known by the name of 'Eden's Farm,' consisting of 22 acres of land on which are 2 Dwelling Houses, 2 Barns, and to which may be added 2 pieces

* Irving, Washington: A History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker. New York, Putnam, 1880. Hudson Edition, p. 464.

of Pasture Land of about 10 acres each. Apply to John Jacob Astor, Cor. Pine and Pearl Sts."

This farm extended along the Bloomingdale Road (Broadway) from about Forty-third to Forty-eighth Street, and northwestward toward the river. William Cutting and John Jacob Astor obtained it under foreclosure in 1803, the Astor share having brought $25,000 at public sale.

Beautiful as the region was, however, it had no distinct community life or organization such as formerly characterized Greenwich Village and Chelsea. Its choice as the summer residence of wealthy New York families was due in a measure to the same cause that populated Greenwich Village and Chelsea; namely, the frequent incursion of yellow fever and cholera, which were a scourge in the city at intervals for more than one hundred years. It was too far from the center of the city to establish even temporary business connection as was done in times of stress in Greenwich Village.

Thus the district developed gradually from wooded stretches into farm lands, from farm lands into city lots, and from city lots to built-up sections, offering the population such homes as the exigencies of the time and conditions could afford. The course of population had largely followed the southeastern side of Manhattan. Boston lay to the northeast and the Boston Post Road ran along the eastern side of the island. For several generations, therefore, the region lay remote from the thriving city to the southward, the only approach to which was by the North River, by farm lanes extending to Chelsea Village below, or by Indian trails which wound through the forest to the Boston Road on the

east. Bloomingdale Road, however, was laid out under the act of June 19, 1703. Starting at Twenty-third Street and Fifth Avenue, and following the general lines of Broadway as it now lies, it proceeded over hill and dale, but with no attempt at grading to a level, all the way to 116th Street, where in 1820 there was erected on the site now occupied by Columbia University, the old Bloomingdale Asylum for the Insane.* It gave ready access to all that tract lying along the Hudson River and was later to become a famous driving thoroughfare.

The Owners of the Soil

After the opening of the Bloomingdale Road, Dutch settlers occupied the land along both sides of it and built a number of small hamlets. On the northern side of the Great Kill, beginning near its mouth, was the Great Kill Farm, owned at least as early as 1714 by Matthys Adolphus Hoppe, whose ancestors had come from Holland in 1652 and had settled in New Amsterdam. Later, in 1786, this farm was purchased by John Leake,† who dwelt on an adjacent farm called

* On the Randel Survey map of 1815 the names Bloomingdale Distillery (Corner Eighth Avenue and Thirty-seventh Street), Bloomingdale Baptist Church (Corner Eighth Avenue and Forty-third Street), Bloomingdale Methodist Episcopal Church (Forty-third Street, near Eighth Avenue), are found. Bloomingdale Square was a public park laid out on land now bounded by Fifty-third and Fifty-seventh Streets, Eighth and Ninth Avenues, and covering 18 acres. See City Plan of 1807, New York Historical Library. When Central Park was established in 1857, Bloomingdale Square was cut into city blocks.

† John Leake founded the Leake and Watts Orphan Asylum at 110th Street. It was opened in 1843, and some of the buildings can still be seen in the yard of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, although the asylum has moved to Yonkers.

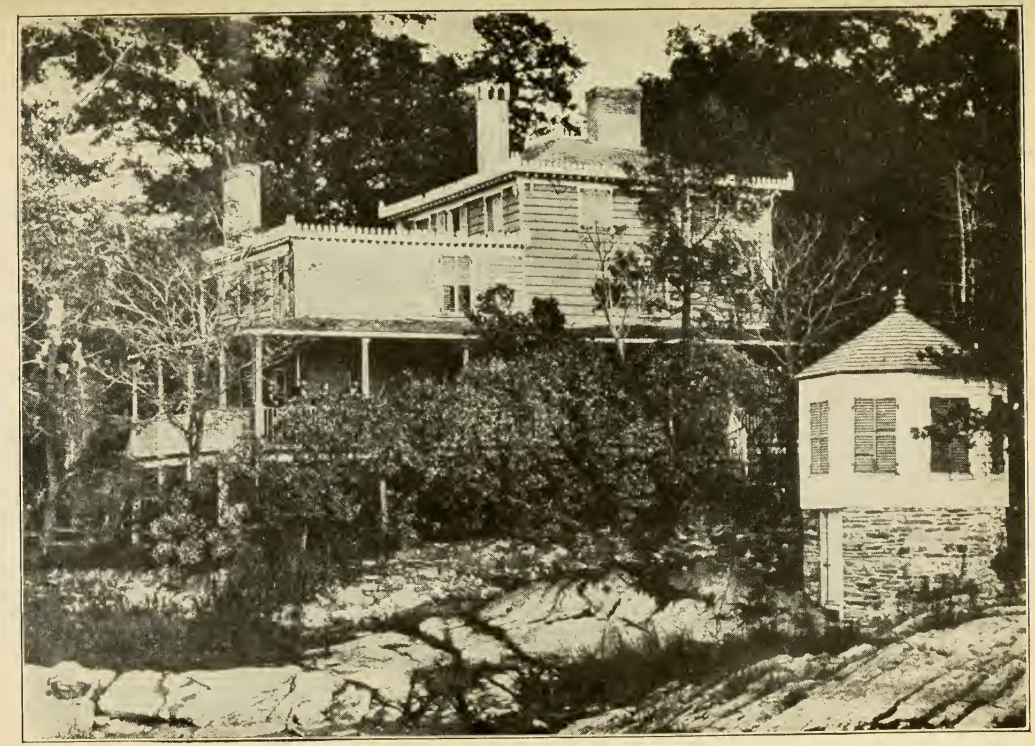
the Hermitage. His house, situated at Forty-third Street, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, was a fine old colonial mansion replaced in the twentieth century by the Hermitage Hotel which still stands on a portion of the old farm.

The descendants of Matthys Hoppe and their connections, who now spelled the name Hopper, acquired most of the farm land adjoining the Hermitage on the north. The Hopper Farm lay between Forty-eighth and Fifty-fifth Streets on both sides of the Bloomingdale Road, and extended to the banks of the Hudson. Running somewhat deviously in a northwesterly direction was Hopper's Lane, the only road to the Hudson in the vicinity. It crossed Broadway at about Fifty-first Street. The original house of Matthys Adolphus Hoppe was built on this lane about where the new branch post office stands at Eighth Avenue and Fifty-first Street.*

The name Hopperville came to designate in general the upper part of the Great Kill district. The settlement there consisted of some 10 or 12 houses, which, with their accompanying outbuildings, constituted the sum total of building operations in the vicinity.

The descendants of the Hopper family intermarried with the Stryker, Mott, Cosine, and Hegeman families, and these names appear with great frequency in the later records of the region. A portion of the Hopper burial ground remained as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, occupying the southwest corner of Ninth Avenue and Fiftieth Street, its surface retaining the old ground level some 8 feet or more above

* Mott, Hopper Stryker: Bloomingdale, The New York of Yesterday.



The Mott and Hopper Homestead
Hudson River and Fifty-fourth Street

The White Cottage, Rapelyea Estate

the adjacent pavement. A landmark of the Hopperville region was the Lennert mansion, between Forty-ninth and Fiftieth Streets, near Tenth Avenue, whose grounds were later used as a park, and eventually as sites for tenements. Another landmark was the mansion of General Stryker, at the foot of Fifty-second Street. Approach to this house was by the Fitzroy Road,* a private lane nearly parallel to Hopper Lane. The Mott homestead was about 400 feet north of the Stryker place. These mansions were fine colonial buildings. Out of the line of the march of the city along the eastern shore they escaped, longer than mansions in other sections of the city, the invasion of the swelling population and consequent demolition.

South of the Great Kill the land belonged to George Rapelje. He was a descendant of an old exiled French family which had gone to Holland and later migrated to New York, where George was born. His story is one of singular misfortune and sorrow.† His father, his grandfather, and an uncle were drowned in the Hudson River. His fiancée died a few days before the time set for their wedding, and he became a social recluse. At the end of the eighteenth century he had prospered greatly in business and had devoted his wealth to the purchase of lands between Thirtieth and Fortieth Streets, west of Eighth Avenue, thus building up the famous Rapelyea Estate of the nineteenth century. His home was in an old farm house known as the White Cottage,‡ situated near the foot of West

* See Randel Survey Map. Blue Book of 1815, New York Historical Library.

† Hamm, M. A.: Famous Families of New York City. New York, Putnam, 1902.

‡ See pp. 39-40, and illustration opposite.

Thirty-fifth Street, with the beautiful scenery of the Hudson in the foreground.

The historic Randel Survey map shows the ownership of the lands in the district in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It also indicates how far at that time the Hopper patent, which originally covered all the map north of the Great Kill, had been sold in smaller portions to various purchasers. Maps of some of the separate estates have been published, showing the partition of the original farm among the first purchasers, whether for houses, for factory sites, or for speculation. Such maps cover the Rapelje—or in modern form, Rapelyea—Estate and the Hermitage Farm, and indicate how the bulk of these was cut into minute subdivisions.* The name Rapelyea Estate still appears upon the tax lists as the owner of numerous remnants of the old Glass-House farm† —the name by which the estate of George Rapelyea, Jr., came to be called.

The Commission of 1807

One century after the opening of the Bloomingdale Road, the transformation of the broad farm acres into city lots, 25 feet wide and 100 feet deep, began. In 1807, a commission which completed its work in 1811 was appointed to draft a city plan.‡ At that time the northern boundary of New York ran along Houston

* Map of Rapelje Estate. Abstracts of Titles. Foster and Thomson, 141 Broadway.

† The name was derived from an unsuccessful attempt to make glass bottles there in the eighteenth century.

‡ Members of this commission were Gouverneur Morris, John Rutherford, and Simeon DeWolf.

Street from the East River to Greenwich Street, and zigzagged up Greenwich Street and down Christopher Street to the Hudson. The new plan extended this boundary to 155th Street. The Middle West Side District is therefore built upon lots designed by the Commission of 1807.*

A brief glance at some of the considerations which guided the commissioners in their work will explain certain features of the present district. For instance, they reasoned that the main course of traffic would be from river to river, across the island, and so they laid out many crosstown streets but few north and south avenues. This arrangement is responsible in large measure for the unparalleled congestion of the north and south traffic on Manhattan Island.

That they felt that their plan, even after it had been decided upon, needed justification, is shown by the following: "It may be a matter of surprise," wrote the commissioners, "that so few vacant spaces have been left, and those so small, for the benefit of fresh air and consequent preservation of health. But those large arms of the sea which embrace Manhattan Island render its situation in regard to health and pleasure, as well as to convenience and commerce, peculiarly felicitous. . . . When, therefore, from the same causes, the price of land is so uncommonly great, it was thought economical to fill all but a few squares, for it was estimated that in half a century fully four hundred thou-

* This year was memorable in many ways for the city. In August, Fulton's steamboat, the Clermont, made its first trip to Albany in thirty-six hours. State and city began to contribute to the support of education, and teaching began in old Public School No. 1 on Chatham Street. This year also saw the founding of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

sand inhabitants would live upon the island of Manhattan." Thus did they underestimate the future population of New York and the magnitude of future immigration to this port, for the population of the city had in 1860 reached 1,174,779.

Speculation in City Lots

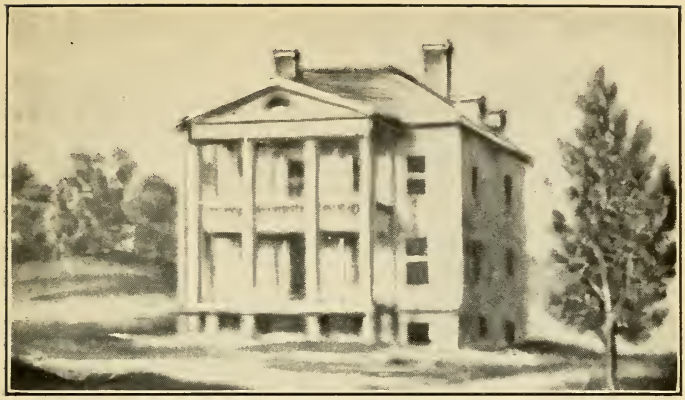
Who were the buyers of the small parcels of land into which the great farms had been surveyed and which were gradually being sold?

In the beginning, many of the purchases were made as speculative investments to be held for an increase in value, which, as the records of the transfer of these properties show, came with due rapidity even in those early times. For example, certain plots of land purchased in 1804 for $7,000 brought $10,000 in 1818,* a corresponding increase in 1829, and sold in 1848 for $28,000. Of course this advance was slow compared with the upward pressure of values on Manhattan Island in the first decade of the twentieth century, but it indicates that investment in country land was even then profitable.

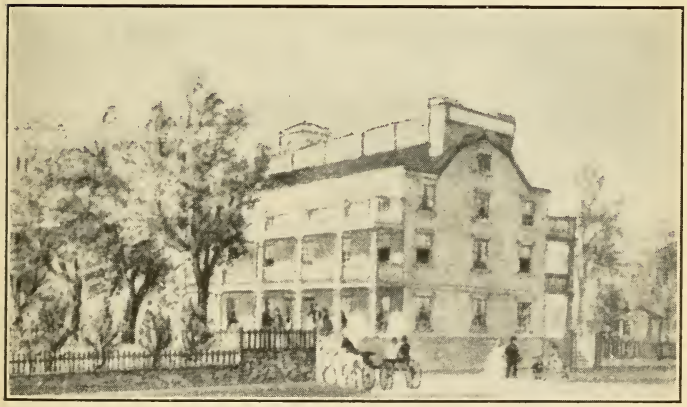
Contemporary with these speculative land purchases were those made by the Germans,† who followed the Dutch into this sparsely occupied suburb. They bought small plots for the building of homes. Their love of quiet family life and their partiality for the individual garden spot directed them to a section of the city as yet uninvaded by urban construction and

* Foster and Thomson: Glasshouse Farm. Abstracts of Land Titles.

† Personal recollections of H. S. Mott, John D. Crimmins, George W. Plunkett.



The Hermitage



The Havemeyer Mansion

A Square Front Cottage
Built by a German settler

traffic. The purchases of such settlers were scattered and amounted to not more than one or two city lots each. On the rear of these lots, facing the streets, they built square-front wooden cottages, usually two stories in height, often with a front porch across the lower story. Between the house and the street stretched the garden with a walk leading down its center. If the householder owned the adjoining lots they were likewise turned into gardens by the frugal possessor, and the produce, if in excess of the family's needs, was sold in the city below.

With the advent of the factories,* gas plants, and slaughter houses, which were built upon the swampy parts of the district, came the Irish, the mill hands, the construction gang laborers,—workers at any sort of occupation that offered a living wage. The housing of this new population brought the next type of purchaser of land parcels,—the speculative builder, who held his property until fully "improved" (usually only a few months), sold it at a fair advance, and reinvested his money in a similar venture.

This parceling of the district, however, was but a transition stage to stronger concentration of ownership. At present, it is true, the possessors of individual lots or groups of two or three lots are counted by hundreds, but several of the descendants of the owners of the large farms still retain goodly portions of these estates, and other dwellers in more fashionable sections of the city have invested largely in the profitable tenement properties of this locality. Much of the Hopper farm, for instance, still remains in the possession of the descendants

* See Chapter V, Coming of the Industries, p. 33, and illustrations opposite pp. 34, 40, and 41.

of John Hopper. The plots marked on the Randel map with the names of Astor and Cutting constitute the old "Eden" farm advertised in 1814.* The share bought by John Jacob Astor still remains in the possession of the various members of that family. The Cutting section has passed to the ownership of Bradish Johnson. The descendants of the other owners named on the map have either rented their properties on long term leaseholds to various tenants, or sold them in small sections after they became divided into city lots.

At present, the largest owners of real estate in the district do not live there, and indeed very seldom visit the locality.† A few German settlers, however, retain their foothold, and some Irish immigrants, by dint of native energy and talent, aided not infrequently by fortunate political affiliations, have acquired ownership of land and themselves become landlords.

Land values throughout the district have risen with time, and if an average of value is struck from Fifth Avenue to the river, it will prove to be about one-thousand-fold that at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is estimated, for instance, that the farm purchased by the Astors in 1803 for $25,000 would now sell for $25,000,000. But the Astor Estate does not sell any more land. It gives leaseholds for twenty-one years, with the privilege of two renewals,—at the end of which time the land must be surrendered to the owners. Tenement builders on such leases must therefore make their houses pay not only the original investment in full,

* See page 11.

† See Tax Assessment Rolls. Department of Taxes and Assessments, Manhattan.

so that the houses may be pulled down at the end of sixty-three years without loss, but must derive an income therefrom in addition to the return of the capital. Moreover, at each renewal of the lease it is the custom to increase the ground rent, so that the tendency of rentals for tenement flats built upon this land is almost inevitably upward.

Beginning of the Housing Evil

It is very easy at this date to see the effect produced in the housing situation of the Middle West Side by leasehold land tenures, absentee landlordism, speculative building operators, and the crowding into the district of low-paid industries which brought a rush of helpless and uncritical tenants.

Such obstacles to healthful and decent homes did not, however, enter the minds of the commission of 1807. They felt that they had done the main thing that was necessary to assure comfortable living conditions when they had saved the city from the flights of fancy of any erratic landscape architect and had secured for the district a succession of sober rectangular blocks.

"In considering the subject of stars and circles," the commissioners wrote, they "could but remember that the city was to be composed principally of the habitations of men, and that strait-sided and right-angled houses are cheap to build and convenient to live in."

Beyond this general provision for strait-sided, right-angled houses, almost no attempt was made to control the housing of the population. Houses were built with

very few regulations, much as owners and speculators wished, and more and more tenements were erected with increasingly smaller and darker quarters, until so many poor people were being forced to sleep in windowless rooms that out of sheer horror and disgust a Citizens' Association was organized in 1864 to work for tenement reform in the directions of decency and health.

This association organized a Council of Hygiene and Public Health, and the city was divided into inspection districts, each of which was surveyed by a sanitary inspector who was a physician. Three of these districts roughly combined coincide with the area of the Middle West Side which we have defined. In 1865 a report was published which gives a clear picture of the neglected state of the district at that date.*

Although the neighborhood still contained many private homes, it had grown to be a region of "tenant houses," as they were then called. There were within the three districts of the sanitary survey about 2,500 such houses, which furnished homes for something like 10,000 families. The peculiarities of these tenant houses, the report pointed out, were that the occupants had less personal interest in and control over the cleanliness of their domiciles than people living in single dwellings; that the small allowance of space and air for each family resulted in extremely unhealthy conditions; and that the landlords showed less concern and expenditure for the welfare of tenants in these buildings than did landlords of single dwellings,

* Citizens' Association. Report of Council of Hygiene upon Sanitary Condition of the City. New York, Appleton, 1865.

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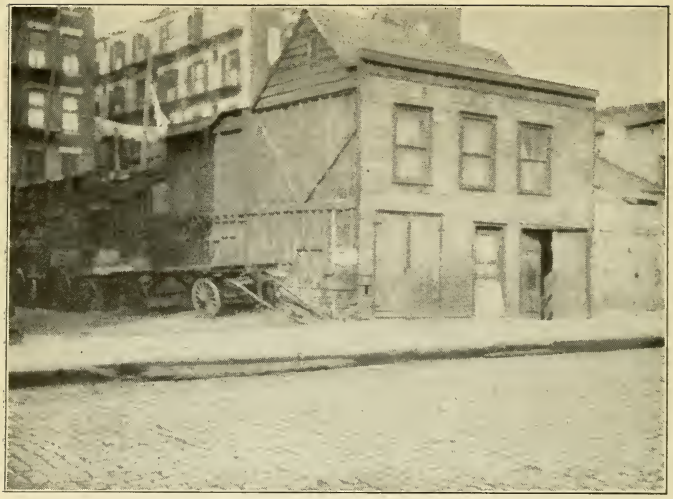

Old Dwelling used as Stable

Squatters' Shacks on San Juan Hill

besides charging a relatively higher rate of rental for domiciles.

While some of the houses were reported as being clean and wellkept, others were found to be in a filthy condition. "The halls are miniature streets," wrote one inspector, "and the same nuisances are found to exist as in the streets, the swill pail taking the place of the garbage box, wet halls and stairs that of muddy gutters."

To the evils of overcrowding and bad ventilation was added that of poor drainage. In the southern part of the district one inspector reported 105 tenant houses without proper sewer connections. Another inspector found that the longest row of houses in his district was without drainage, except for a short distance where 30 houses were connected by a single drain with a Ninth Avenue sewer.

In the upper part of the district were several hundred shanties, the homes of squatters. They consisted of one room which was sometimes without a floor, were without drainage of any kind, and the only water they had was brought in pails from the hydrants in one of the avenues. Many of these squatters were undoubtedly low whites and Negroes who had been drawn to the district by the building of the Croton Aqueduct, operations on which began in 1837 and were completed in 1842. These households, states the report, were the center of much disorder. A large number were unlicensed groggeries and headquarters for petty thieving and seemed to be outside the pale of police scrutiny.

The thoroughfares of the district were badly neglected. In the cross streets above Fiftieth Street, some of which were already densely populated, the

gutters into which garbage and refuse were habitually thrown always contained more or less water. In wet weather some of the streets in the neighborhood of Tenth and Eleventh Avenues were almost impassable. "Eleventh Avenue," one inspector reported, "is always in a filthy condition and seems to be entirely out of the range of the street sweepers who occasionally make their appearance in other parts of my district." *

The whole neighborhood abounded in conditions which the inspectors did not hesitate to characterize as nuisances. Among these were the swill-milk cow stables, of which there were several in the district. These were establishments in which cows were kept in stalls and fed on the swill from a neighboring distillery. The animals belonged to persons living in the neighborhood and the milk was sold to the poorer families. "A proper re-enforcement of the 'act to prevent the adulteration of milk and the traffic in impure and unwholesome milk, passed April 23, 1863,' would entirely suppress this business," the inspector stated.†

At the date of the sanitary survey there were 46 slaughter houses in the district. These and the offal dock at the foot of West Thirty-eighth Street constituted perhaps the worst nuisances. The slaughter houses, instead of being drained into the sewers, were usually drained into the gutters of the streets where the children of the neighboring tenements habitually played.

One of the results of the conditions described was the prevalence of disease—fevers, cholera infantum,

* Citizens' Association. Report of Council of Hygiene upon Sanitary Condition of the City.

† Ibid., p. 263.

and dysentery—in this vicinity. "Our sanitary inspection of this district," the medical inspectors reported, "has furnished to our own mind abundant evidence that the primitive condition of the soil and the atmosphere of the district were remarkably favorable to health; while the existing local causes of disease here are both numerous and neglected."

The social significance of these evils was not ignored by the physicians who made this first survey of the Middle West Side. They emphasized the fact that sanitary neglect of the kind described in the report was not only the source of great mortality but was also the cause of moral degradation among the people.

IV

WATERFRONT AND TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT *

THE waterfront of the city has been called its most valuable financial possession; but the history of its development does not indicate great municipal appreciation of its value. The water border has been allowed by the city to develop in its own haphazard way, with only an occasional effort at regulating some detached part of it. Various portions passed from time to time to private ownership, until at the close of the Civil War, when the renewal of commerce and industry began to require increased harbor facilities, the city awoke to the fact that it controlled somewhat less than 5 per cent of the usable portions of its harbor. It was then obliged to obtain such docks as it needed through condemnation proceedings, and to pay vastly increased prices for these properties.

The East River, with its islands, its sheltered roadstead, and its shore fronting southward from the Battery to Corlears Hook, was at the time of the early

* The gist of the legai part of this chapter is taken from a report by Sidney Willett Hoag, Jr., assistant engineer in the Department of Docks and Ferries. Published in report of Municipal Engineers of City of New York, 1905.

Bulkhead Not Yet Built
West Forty-ninth Street

Unfinished Bulkheads
West Fiftieth Street

Finished Pier and Bulkhead
West Fifty-second Street

settlement considered a better harbor than the North River. The shores were low and accessible all the way to the well-watered valley of the Harlem. The upper western part of the island was high and bleak* and the river was open to a long sweep of northwesterly and southerly winds and was often filled with ice. So the earliest New York docks were built on the south and east shore of Manhattan along the East River. Long Island and the intervening islets were more accessible than Jersey with its high and forbidding cliffs. Thus the city fronted south and turned its back on the beautiful Hudson.

The details of the city's surrender of the rights over its shores cannot be recounted here. We can only review the main facts. Up to 1871 a series of blunders had marked municipal proceedings in regard to the ownership of piers and to the bulkhead line.† In that year a dock department, known as the board of docks, was created by the legislature with authority over the whole waterfront. At this time the bulkhead line was established, the process of doing which required the filling in of land along the shore in many places throughout the city. The land thus filled in is in certain localities called "the farm."‡

Upon the establishment of the Dock Department the commissioners of the New York state land office granted to the city all the hitherto undisposed-of land under water, extending out to a fixed line encircling the

* Dix, J. A.: City of New York, pp. 31 ff. New York, 1853.

† A theoretical shore line out to which land structures may be built and from which the length of piers is measured.

‡ For the supposed origin of this term see Barnes, Charles B.: The Longshoremen. New York, Survey Associates. (In press.)

island of Manhattan, known as the Exterior Water Grant Line. This line was in most places several hundred feet beyond the ancient low water mark, and its object was to straighten the irregularities of the shore. Beyond this extreme limit, the harbor is under the control of state and national authorities, the War Department having jurisdiction.*

In the Middle West Side, the bulkhead line is in many places 250 feet west of the eastern boundary of Twelfth Avenue, which, as the avenue is 100 feet wide, leaves 150 feet for wharfage use. From this line the piers are now permitted to extend 700 feet into the river.† Beyond that point the city still owns 50 feet of land under water. But the work of building out the crooked shore to a straight and uniform line has never been completed. Twelfth Avenue is under water between Thirty-eighth and Forty-first and between Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh Streets. Between the latter two streets it is necessary to round a long cross-town block in order to reach the neighboring pier, and the stale back waters which fill the artificial cove thus formed give off the most offensive odors. The bulkheads are in fact incomplete all the way from Forty-fourth to Fiftieth Street.

Of the piers and bulkheads in the district, only eight, recently built, are of the full 700 feet length allowed. Twelve are 500 feet long, having been built to an earlier bulkhead line established in 1890. In addition to the foregoing, there are two piers considerably shorter than the others. These are privately owned, the one

* See map of shore line, Department of Docks and Ferries.

† The length of piers differs throughout the city according to the need of the district and the depth of the surrounding water.

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Eleventh Avenue
Freight train in distance

between Forty-first and Forty-second Streets belonging to the Consolidated Gas Company, and the other just north of Forty-eighth Street being on the Bradish Johnson Estate. As a matter of fact, the city at present owns only five bulkheads and piers in this district. These are either leased for ten-year periods or are held for general wharfage where any craft may tie up for any length of time by paying the public rates of toll.

The development of the piers has been in the following manner: The city has usually permitted the owner of a piece of property to construct a bulkhead on the line in front of it, and to fill the intervening space to the established grade. He was then given ownership in fee simple of the bulkhead and the ground thus made, the city reserving the use of such portion as was needed for a marginal street. Many property owners took advantage of this permission to build and operate piers. Sometimes the city would reserve rights to a share in their wharfage tolls. Sometimes the property owner would be notified by the city to complete a bulkhead and to build a pier, of which he might retain the ownership. If he refused, the city could construct the pier and bulkhead, and either collect from him the cost, or itself retain the ownership of the pier.

The Influence of the Railroads

The introduction of the street car and railroad lines into the district has had a striking influence on its development. For long, the lumbering, ungainly stagecoach of colonial days had remained the only practical mode of transportation to and from the region. The customary fare had been 25 cents for a stage ride from

Fiftieth Street to City Hall Park. There were dozens of these lines operating in various parts of the city.* Those who could not afford their fare did not ride. In 1852, the street railways began to enter the district, and the stage-coaches to disappear.

The Hudson River Railroad was opened in 1851, with a station at Thirtieth Street and Eleventh Avenue. In 1846 the unoccupied western bank of Manhattan Island had been readily granted to this company for its tracks; the franchise to extend for fifty years. Few objected to the franchise, for the character of the tract in those days was such as to render its disposal a matter of little popular interest.

The year 1852 saw the opening of the first street railway.† This was the Sixth Avenue Railway, and the other surface lines were opened in the following order: 1854, the Eighth Avenue Railway; 1859, the Ninth Avenue; 1863, the West Belt on Tenth Avenue; and 1864, the Seventh Avenue Railway.

In 1871 a revolution in municipal transit took place. It was marked by the construction of the Ninth Avenue Elevated, which was opened that year as far as Thirtieth Street, and in 1878 was extended northward. The Ninth Avenue Elevated was followed in 1878 by the Sixth Avenue Elevated. In 1884, the Forty-second Street, Manhattanville, and St. Nicholas Avenue surface line began operation. In 1892 the Fifty-third Street Elevated tracks were built connecting the Sixth

* Part of the ground now occupied by the Eighth Avenue car barns, at Forty-ninth and Fiftieth Streets, was formerly occupied by O'Keefe and Durfee's Stage Stables. Other stables were in the vicinity.

† Public Service Commission. Bureau of Franchises.

and Ninth Avenue Elevated lines. In 1904, the Subway was opened.

As these various transit lines entered the district one by one, each had its influence on building operations and land values. The surface cars were, of course, drawn by horses, and the location of two of the largest car barns in or near the district brought many of the car conductors and other employés into the vicinity to live. One of the barns was on Tenth Avenue between Fifty-second and Fifty-third Streets; another on Seventh Avenue and Fifty-first Street, which is still the position of a large depot and starting point of many cars. Later the Eighth Avenue line built its barn on this avenue between Forty-ninth and Fiftieth Streets. The result was so great a demand for houses that the real estate speculator's chief problem was to get materials enough and a sufficient number of swiftly built houses to supply his uncritical tenants. He paid no attention to such matters as windows, ventilation, bathtubs, and water closets. In any case his tenement would be filled to the roof and the interest on his money paid back before the year was out.

No other railroad seems to have had the effect that the first elevated line had, in hurrying the building of houses. Although in 1871 the Ninth Avenue Elevated was opened only to Thirtieth Street and Ninth Avenue, the promise of its extension was sure of fulfilment, and Ninth Avenue and the adjacent region began to fill with tenements. The influence of this railway was two-fold.* Below Thirty-third Street a large number of individual dwellings of brick and stone had been built, and the neighborhood promised to become a high grade

* Testimony of various property owners in the vicinity.

colony of well-to-do residents. When the elevated was proposed, these people made vigorous protest, for they foresaw the disastrous effect which the unsightly trestle and the smoke and roar of the trains—in those early days drawn by steam locomotives—were bound to have on adjacent land values. When the road was finally constructed and opened, their predictions were realized. Property values fell, the tendency to build high grade homes was checked, and another neighborhood was added to those already falling under the ban of noise, smoke, and civic neglect.

This road did much to build up regions to the north. It provided easy access to the locality for men whose work took them to other parts of the city, and very soon both sides of Ninth Avenue as well as other parts of the Middle West Side district filled with houses and tenements.

V

COMING OF THE INDUSTRIES

AT the opening of the Civil War, not only was the district still scantily peopled, but no appreciable growth had yet taken place. Some house industries were carried on by the thrifty German inhabitants, but truck gardening seems to have been their main occupation. Only one large factory, the Higgins Carpet Factory, was in operation down to war time.

But the river bank in the region of Eleventh Avenue, especially the part south of the Great Kill swamp, offered a desirable site for factories; the Hudson River as well as the recently built railroad were just at hand convenient for transportation, and land was cheap in this isolated,* neglected tract. Factories began to appear and the borders of the swamp became the resort of such grades of business as generate nuisances intolerable in the residental parts of a city. The local slaughter houses had, as a matter of fact, made their headquarters here from very early times. They are at present limited by law† to the three blocks they occupy,

* Sixth Avenue was opened north of Eighteenth Street in 1825; Seventh Avenue, north of Eleventh Street, in 1828; Ninth and Eleventh Avenues, north of Forty-seventh Street, in 1837; Fifth Avenue, north of Thirteenth Street, in 1857. The cross streets were opened mostly in 1837, 1838, and 1839.

† New York Board of Aldermen. Ordinances, Crosby Code.

and need for further expansion would compel their withdrawal from the island.

The description of the river front by an eye witness of the early fifties, Fitz James O'Brien, may help us to realize more vividly than we could otherwise do the character of the region at that time.

"There is, or was six years ago, a vast flat land stretching along the New York shore of the North River close to where Thirty-second Street vanishes into a swamp, in which unborn avenues are supposed to be slowly maturing. Although yet in embryo, they are already christened, and city engineers have imaginative ground plans hanging on their walls where Twelfth and Thirteenth Avenues are boldly represented with as much minuteness as Fifth or Sixth.

"This tract of land is perhaps the most melancholy and mysterious spot in the whole city. The different streets that cross the Island pull up, as it were, suddenly on reaching this dreary place, seemingly afraid to trust themselves any further. The buildings that approach nearest to its confines are long, low ranges of fetid slaughter houses, where on Sunday bloated butcher-boys lounge against the walls; and on weekdays one hears through the closed doors the muffled blow, the heavy fall of oxen within, the groan and the hard-drawn breath; and then a red sluggish stream trickles from under the doorway and flows into the gutter, where hungry dogs wait impatiently to lap it up. The murderous atmosphere, these streamlets of blood, seem appropriate, however, as one approaches the desolate locality." *

In 1847, the Higgins Carpet Factory, which later

* O'Brien, Fitz James: Life, Stories and Poems. Boston, 1880.

Higgins Carpet Factory
West Forty-fourth Street

Slaughter Houses
West Thirty-ninth Street

grew into a great manufacturing industry, was located at Forty-third Street just north of the Great Kill. This plant had outgrown its quarters on Pearl Street, and the banks of the Hudson along the line of the proposed "Dolly Varden" (Hudson River) Railroad offered the combined attractions of cheap land and transportation facilities by both rail and river. The factory grew until in 1882 it covered 72 city lots—there are 64 in a block—and employed 2,000 operatives with an annual payroll of $750,000. The weavers and skilled laborers were largely Scotch, who had come to America voluntarily, drawn by the prospect of higher wages and a better standard of living. Some dyers from the Kidderminster Mills had been brought here by the Higgins Company, but they were few in number.*

The operatives sought residences nearby and thus stimulated building operations in the vicinity. By the close of the war a settlement of carpet workers had grown up along Forty-second Street. In the seventies, a few French Canadians began to drift into various New York industries. Some of these were employed by the Higgins Company, who found them quicker than the Irish and very efficient workmen. At their own desire they were paid on the piece-work basis.

In 1901 this firm, which at that date employed 2,700 hands, effected a consolidation with the Hartford Carpet Company, and 1904 completed the removal of the manufacturing plant to Thompsonville, Connecticut. When the factory moved to Connecticut the operatives were offered the opportunity to accompany it

* Statements by the company's secretary.

thither. Not over 10 per cent accepted, and these very soon became dissatisfied and gradually drifted back to New York. The glamor of the city was too strong. The welfare agencies provided at Thompsonville, even separate cottages and gardens, free clubs and reading rooms, pool tables, bowling alleys, and baths, could not compete with the evening stroll along New York avenues and window-wishing trips along the shopping streets. Dark rooms, foul air, congested, dirty, squalid, all but unlivable home conditions, if only somewhere in New York, were preferable to the lonely monotony of a country town of 5,000 inhabitants in northern Connecticut. In spite of the defection, the factory prospered, and now employs 4,500 hands.*

Other factories followed the Higgins Company to the Great Kill district—iron and steel foundries, breweries, piano works in large number, dressed meat establishments, fat-rendering houses, and gas works.

The two gas plants in the district, the Metropolitan Gas Company and the Municipal Gas Light Company, have had an important influence upon its growth. Incorporated originally as independent companies, with franchises limiting the territory which they were to supply, they were united in 1884 with four other companies to form the Consolidated Gas Company of New York City, which has since become, by process of stock purchase, the proprietor of almost every light, heat, and power company in the city and of some companies outside its boundaries.

The first of the original plants was begun in 1858 under the name of the Metropolitan Gas Company,

* *Carpet Trade Review*, 1900–1909, passim.

with a thirty-year franchise. The actual production of gas was not started until 1863. The plant was built in the river bed on restored land. It makes gas from the distillation of coal, and the location was chosen because it permitted coal ships and barges to discharge their cargoes directly into the company's bunkers.

In the seventies the Metropolitan Company employed about 400 men, mainly Irish. Later a considerable number of Germans entered their employ. Both of these races gradually drifted into other occupations, however, and now 40 per cent of the employés of the Consolidated Company are Poles, while the rest are distributed among many nationalities. The payroll for 1910 registered from 140 to 180 men, the larger number being employed during the winter months. The decrease at the West Side plant is due partly to the installation of labor-saving machinery, and partly to the general policy of the company to concentrate its works, as fast as possible, at its common center, Astoria, Long Island. Its present city location covers the entire block bounded by Forty-first and Forty-second Streets, Eleventh Avenue and the river, portions of two adjacent blocks, and a private pier between Forty-first and Forty-second Streets.

The second of the original plants was begun in 1874 as The Municipal Oxygen Gas Company. In 1878 it became The Municipal Gas Light Company—the name under which the plant operated until the time of its consolidation with the others in 1884. Its history has been similar to that of the older gas company, except that it never employed so many men. Its payroll registers from 80 to 90 at different seasons of the year.

Its plant was built at the edge of the shore, where it makes gas from water, separating the hydrogen from the water by mechanical and chemical processes, and enriching it with oil products to give illuminating qualities. This station occupies the two blocks between Forty-fourth and Forty-sixth Streets, Eleventh Avenue and the North River.

Other river-bank industries, now things of the past, have had their influence in building up the district. There was always a deep and safe anchorage of 20 or 25 feet at low tide, close in shore at this part of the island. Huge rafts of logs were floated down the Hudson from the up-state forests and run inside a great circle of holding booms off Forty-fourth Street. Extensive saw-mills, operated by steam, were stationed at the foot of this street. The building of bulkheads and the improvement of the waterfront left these mills inland, and they were discontinued. Their disappearance was in any case but a matter of time, for the up-state lumber operations came to an end about the middle of the nineteenth century. While a good many lumber yards still remain in the western portion of the district, there are but few mills.

The Hudson River in this region is said to have formerly contained large and productive oyster beds, and there were several oyster fisheries between Forty-fourth and Forty-fifth Streets. At the foot of West Forty-eighth Street were situated ship yards where large numbers of skilled shipwrights were employed in the construction of towing barges. The house-building industries were represented by the lime kilns at Fifty-fifth Street and the river, and the brownstone yards situated at several points along the shore where

this once popular building material was stored and shaped for market. Thirty years ago, brownstone was much in vogue; even the Vanderbilt houses, built in 1882, the costliest mansions in the city at that time, being constructed of that popular material. Now that brownstone has given place to marble, granite, steel, and concrete, the old waterfront industry has also disappeared. Across the river at Guttenberg and Weehawken, when the value of the quarries there began to be understood, many laborers from the Great Kill district sought employment. As the industry grew, the number of these workmen increased, until any morning at about 6:30 one might see a small fleet of skiffs putting out from the Manhattan shore, each conveying one or two workmen toward the New Jersey quarries, and in the evening the same fleet returning homeward.

Again let us take a look at the district through the eyes of a contemporary. Our second informant is visiting the scene a score or more years later than the earlier writer. He writes of the neighborhood of the old Rapelyea Cottage:

"At the foot of Thirty-fourth Street and North River we stood this morning on the new-looking, clean wharf, which stretches out into the pure waters. Opposite were the green heights of beautiful Hoboken and the lofty banks way up to Fort Lee, crested with trees and gleaming like emeralds in the golden sunshine of June. Four years ago Eleventh Avenue was all encumbered with unsightly débris. To-day (1875) there are great and improving changes. The rubbish cleaned away, a lofty, airy and commodious market building has arisen which, if not admirable for its architecture, is

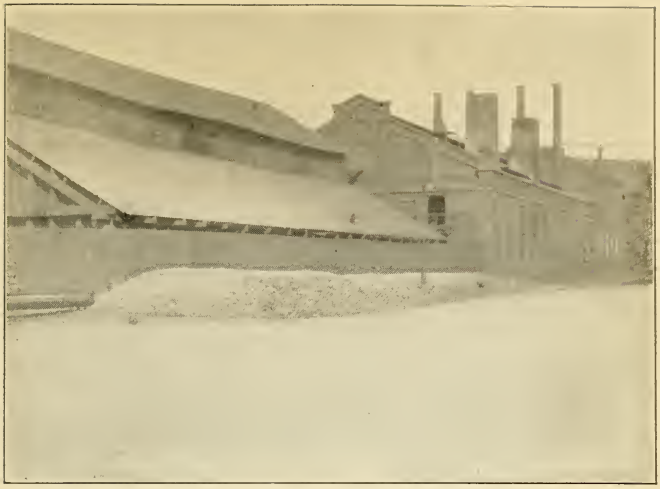
certainly an immense improvement on any other building for the same purpose in the city. Factories, depots, dwellings are towering all around. These almost hide from view the old and once beautiful cottage which strangely enough is left on the East Side of the Avenue just opposite the market. It is the Rapelyea farmhouse, better known to those who knew the out-of-town resorts of fifty years ago, as the White Cottage." *

The market building referred to still stands, but the realization of its original purpose failed. The population was not of a character to support such a market. It is now a depot for various New York and Chicago packing houses (Morris, Swift, Schwarzschild and Sulzberger), as well as a hay and produce exchange. The front continues to bear, however, the original legend in great raised letters, "Manhattan Market, 1871."

Two blocks north, and one west, of where the Higgins plant was once located, is the factory of Wessel, Nickel and Gross, manufacturers of pianofortes. This was founded by Otto Wessel some forty years ago. It employed from 200 to 500 workmen, mostly Germans, who had been skilled cabinet makers before immigrating and who now sought employment where their training and experience could bring them the most profitable return.

When the factory was established, more and more tenement houses were coming to occupy the region and furnish homes for working people. In its early days the employés lived in the immediate vicinity, but as lands grew in value and economic conditions baffled their home-craving Teutonic disposition, large num-

* Greatorex and Despard: Old New York from the Battery to Bloomingdale. Chapter on The White Cottage. New York, 1875.



Gas Station
West Forty-fourth Street

Old Manhattan Market

Travers Brothers' Twine Factory

Wessel, Nickel, and Gross Piano Factory

bers sought regions where the price of land was not yet prohibitive for their small means. They went into Long Island and New Jersey, and now not more than 50 per cent of the German operatives who still compose a large number of the total 800 employés live in the vicinity of the factory.*

In 1869, Travers Brothers started a twine and cordage business in West Fifty-second Street. Later, in 1889, they built a large factory at Number 518–528 in that street. Here they employed about 900 operatives, about equally divided between the sexes, in the production of twine, cordage, hammocks, and similar merchandise. The payroll amounted to from $3,000 to $4,000 a week, or about $200,000 a year. In 1907, the firm failed. Its manufacturing plant was closed, its equipment disposed of at public auction, and the building advertised for sale.

The skilled laborers in this industry were all Scotch and had been sent for from abroad because the machinery that Travers Brothers used in their finest processes had to be obtained in Scotland and experienced men were needed to run it. During the two last years of the factory's activity, a considerable number of Poles and Italians were employed. This caused a great deal of trouble with the other hands, but the scarcity of native labor made it necessary to engage them.†

A little beyond the confines of this district, in the neighborhood of Forty-seventh Street and Broadway—but exercising considerable influence upon its development, was an industry which flourished for about a

* Statement of the firm of Wessel, Nickel and Gross.

† Statement by Paul Travers.

third of a century, and then practically disappeared. It was the manufacture of carriages. As the years went by, the industry assumed such large proportions that New Yorkers called the point where it was carried on the American Longacre in imitation of the carriage-building section of London.

The carriage-building industry employed only men, and the occupation is variously estimated to have brought a population of from 5,000 to 10,000 people into the adjacent region. The largest establishment was the Brewster factory, situated on the west side of Broadway. With the coming of the automobile into general demand, however, the carriage-building trade declined, and the name Longacre Square which appeared upon the earlier city maps, has in recent years given place to that of Times Square.*

The industries enumerated represent by no means all of the chief manufacturing establishments which have been, or are now, situated in the district; they have been selected from the most important, and are typical of its industrial growth.

In 1911 the Bureau of Social Research, acting in behalf of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, made a study of conditions in industrial establishments in the West Side District, in the course of which information was obtained as to the number of men, women, and children employed in each shop or factory. All establishments employing five or more

* Historical Guide to New York City, p. 121. "In 1872 Longacre Square became the New York center of the carriage industry begun by Brewster and others, and one of the trade journals likened it to London's Longacre Street in which the carriage trade was centered. The square having, at the time, no name, the city authorities gave it that of 'Longacre.'"

MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN EMPLOYED IN INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE MIDDLE WEST SIDE, BY INDUSTRIES, 1911*

Industry	Establishments	EMPLOYÉS			TOTAL	
		Men	Women	Children	Number	Per cent
Pianos	24	2,727	146	49	2,922	27.3
Printing	25	1,355	858	32	2,245	21.0
Metal	82	1,845	104	1	1,950	18.2
Furs, etc.	9	479	147	..	626	5.9
Wood manufactures	42	594	16	..	610	5.7
Laundry work	14	133	465	3	601	5.6
Candies and food products	12	256	258	3	517	4.8
Bakery products	60	264	2	..	266	2.5
Garments and textiles	11	92	154	8	254	2.4
Stone, clay, and glass	7	212	..	1	213	2.0
Mineral and soda waters	12	157	1	..	158	1.5
Dyeing and cleaning	10	100	39	1	140	1.3
Toilet preparations and chemicals	10	47	46	1	94	.9
Brewery products	4	86	..	..	86	.8
Rag sorting and picking	1	8	8	..	16	.1
Total	323	8,355	2,244	99	10,698	100.0

* From Preliminary Report, New York Factory Investigating Commission, Vol. I, p. 305.

persons, except packing houses, coal yards, and gas houses, were visited.

Of the 10,698 persons employed in the establishments visited 8,355, or 78 per cent, were men; 2,244, or 21 per cent, were women; and 99, or 1 per cent, were children.

Of the industries examined, those employing the largest number of men were, in the order mentioned, the manufacture of pianos, printing, and metal work. Seventy-one per cent of all the men were employed in these three industries. Printing, laundry work, and the manufacture of candies and food products gave work to 70 per cent of all the women employed in the establishments visited.

The results of an inquiry of this sort do not show the occupations of the inhabitants of the district, for it is evident that many of the employés in the establishments visited may live in other parts of the city, while many inhabitants of the district are known to be employed elsewhere. The figures secured are, nevertheless, significant as indicating the nature of the employment which residents of the West Side are able to find close at hand, and the character of the industries which leave their impression on the neighborhood.

VI

CHARACTER OF THE POPULATION

IT is impossible to determine the national composition of the population of the Middle West Side by means of the federal census reports. The statistics as to race, country of birth, and country of birth of parents which are compiled every ten years are not presented separately for any division of New York City the boundaries of which correspond to those of the district which is the subject of this study. The census schedules have, however, been used as the basis of a more localized tabulation. In its first annual report, the Tenement House Department of the city of New York presented tables, based on the schedules of the Census of 1900, showing by city blocks, the race, nativity, and nativity of parents of the heads of families in the "tenement house population" of the city. Statistics have been secured for the Middle West Side by bringing together, from the tables presented by the Tenement House Department, the figures for the blocks situated in the district.

Information relative to the race and nationality of heads of families in the tenement house population is, clearly, less significant than is similar information for the total population, for the proportion of persons of the various nationalities will not necessarily be the same in the tenement house population as in the general popula-

tion. Furthermore, the proportion of persons of a given race will not be the same as the proportion of heads of families of that race. The statistics tabulated are, however, significant in spite of their limitations, as indicating, in a general way, what races were to be found in the Middle West Side in 1900. No data for years more recent than 1900 were available when this study was made.

There were in the year mentioned 22,454 heads of families in the tenement house population of the district. Of these heads of families 13,452, or 60 per cent, were foreign born, and 9,002 were native born. Heads of families belonging to the white race numbered 20,942, or 93 per cent of the total, and Negro heads of families 1,481, or over 6 per cent. There were but 31 heads of families of other races; namely, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian. The degree in which the various European nationalities were represented in the tenement house population is shown by a classification of heads of families according to the countries in which their parents were born. Figures are given in the table on opposite page.

Heads of families of Irish parentage, constituting 37 per cent of the total, were found to be most numerous, followed by heads of families of German parentage, amounting to 30 per cent of the total, and by those of American parentage, amounting to 16 per cent of the total. The next largest group, constituting but 3.5 per cent of the entire number, was that composed of heads of families of English and Welsh parentage. Two and six-tenths per cent of all the families were of Italian parentage and 1.8 per cent of Scottish parentage.

The principal race elements inhabiting the district

COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF PARENTS OF HEADS OF FAMILIES IN TENEMENT HOUSE POPULATION OF THE MIDDLE WEST SIDE, 1900 *

Country of birth	HEADS OF FAMILIES WHOSE PARENTS WERE BORN AS SPECIFIED	
	Number	Per cent
Ireland	8,352	37.2
Germany	6,649	29.7
United States	3,619	16.1
England and Wales	784	3.5
Italy	578	2.6
Scotland	413	1.8
France	270	1.2
Norway, Sweden, and Denmark	259	1.2
Russia	205	.9
Austria and Hungary	172	.8
Poland	49	.2
Bohemia	19	.1
Other countries	622	2.8
Mixed	434	1.9
Total	22,425	100.0

* Compiled from the schedules of the Federal Census, tabulated by the Tenement House Department of the City of New York. First Report of the Tenement House Department of the City of New York, 1902–1903. Of the 22,454 heads of families enumerated, 29 could not be classified according to nativity of parents.

were, therefore, in 1900, besides the native American, the Irish, the German, and the Negro. Their presence there is easily accounted for.

The first great wave of Irish immigration to this country was composed of those who fled from the famine of 1843. These were followed by others in 1851—the year when the eviction laws took away their homes.

During these two periods Ireland was abandoned by several millions of her poorer inhabitants, most of whom came to America. The famine of 1879 stimulated anew the stream of immigration, which, as far as the Irish were concerned, had a tendency to stop short in the port of New York. Many immigrants came to the West Side and obtained employment in the gas houses and in other unskilled occupations.

Like the Irish, the Germans were early driven to America by economic bankruptcy at home.* The movement began in the eighteenth century, when considerable numbers entered the country through the port of Philadelphia. German immigration greatly increased in the nineteenth century, being especially heavy to the port of New York between 1817 and 1853 and in the years following 1866, when many young Germans left their fatherland to avoid army service.

While the Germans as a race were less content than the Irish with the crowded life of the city tenements, so that many of them pushed on to western settlements and pioneer conditions, the skilled workmen among them could not find the high wages which their craftsmanship demanded except in the great centers of industry. The district which is the subject of this study has long been marked by the presence of many high grade, skilled German workmen, large numbers of whom are, as we have shown, employed in the piano industry.†

* Faust, A. B.: The German Element in the United States. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1909.

† See Chapter V, Coming of the Industries, p. 33. The Germans of the West Side are largely of South German or Palatine stock. A. B. Faust, in his work on The German Element in the United States, has pointed out that the area which furnished the largest number of German emigrants was the southwestern part of Germany—the Palatinate, Würtemberg, and Baden.

Many contributory causes have augmented the incoming stream of both Germans and Irish and lately of other nationalities such as the Italians and Slavs. Some of these factors have been the shortening of the voyage by the introduction of the steamships; the great increase in this country of constructive industries following the Civil War, particularly during the period from 1867 to 1872; and in recent years the ceaseless activity of steamship companies in stimulating migration. The industrial depression following the year 1872 checked the incoming tide for a time, but the return of prosperity in 1879 again swelled it to a flood. To supply proper housing and regular occupations to those newcomers who settled in the Middle West Side became a difficult problem.

This fact was early noted by the Council of Hygiene and Public Health, in their report of 1865 already quoted, which thus described conditions in the region roughly coinciding with the northern part of our district:

"Those who reside in shanties are with few exceptions, Irish and Germans, the Germans predominating. They are engaged in humble occupations. Many are day laborers, employed by contractors in various kinds of work, as in grading, paving, and sewering streets, and in the removal of rock, or in excavating for building purposes. Some are employed in the stables of the city railroads and stage companies, or in the Central Park, and not a few are in the army. In addition to these occupations and occasionally as a sole means of support, many families keep cows or pigs, with poultry. In the brick and wooden tenements reside the large class of mechanics, also tailors and shoemakers."*

* Citizens' Association. Report of Council of Hygiene, etc. 1865.

As has been noted, the Scotch weavers and other skilled workers in the carpet and twine factories who formerly constituted an important element in the industrial population, moved out of the neighborhood after the removal of the plants in which they had been employed.

Two Negro colonies exist in the district, one on its north boundary, east of Ninth Avenue, and the other in its southern section between Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh Streets, and Ninth and Eleventh Avenues. The northern colony is composed of the remnants and progeny of the Negro colony called "Seneca Village," which formerly occupied the southern portion of the land now used for Central Park. Most of these had been employed on the Croton Aqueduct, built in 1840–42. The opening of the park in 1857 dislodged the greater number from that quarter. Many moved beyond the Harlem, while others found homes in the vicinity of the upper end of the park.

The colony in the southern section of the district seems to have been located there since very early times. It was the Negroes in these quarters that the draft rioters, who recognized in the race the cause of the drafts, "shot up" in 1863. There were enough Negroes there to create a counter riot of goodly dimensions, although they were finally terrorized and driven into temporary hiding by their opponents.

The district of which we write has been known for many years as the scene of disorders, of disregard of property rights and public peace. Certain it is that in the minds of New Yorkers who live outside the district and who do not know the hard lives and labor of many of the tenement dwellers there, as well as in

the minds of the police authorities, there still lingers a tendency, and doubtless a liking, to think and speak of the district by the nickname that disorders, rioting, and crime won for it in the early days of its settlement; namely, "Hell's Kitchen."

The "toughest" characters of the city are reputed to have moved into the locality, where it cost them almost nothing to live. They constructed temporary hovels of slabs from the sawmills nearby and of various waste products of building material. Riots were common and the major crimes not infrequent. It was no unusual thing for a policeman to be assaulted in broad daylight and robbed of valuables and weapons, and even of clothing. It was unsafe for an unprotected citizen to walk through that quarter at any time of the day, and the neighboring police stations kept on hand large forces of reserves, in constant expectation of being called out to quell riots or to apprehend footpads, thieves, and murderers.

Some early manifestations of disorder and the names of some of its most stalwart promoters may be of interest. On the north side of Thirty-ninth Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, shortly after the close of the Civil War, dwelt a truckman named Morrisey. His business was the carting and dumping of waste. He owned the two-story house in which he lived, and, while essentially honest, was quarrelsome and disorderly in conduct. Any kind of a row in the neighborhood was to him a call to arms. His family shared his fight-loving disposition, and among them they managed to keep a row on most of the time.

Adjacent to the Morrisey property on the east was a plot owned by one Wilson, on which stood two one-

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
LIBRARY

story buildings, one in the rear of the other. In the rear building a gang of counterfeiters made their headquarters for a period, the length of which is undetermined. Sometime in the seventies, apparently, the gang was apprehended and brought to justice. This gang and others who made a rendezvous of the place bore the name of "Hell's Brood," and from this name came the other of "Hell's Kitchen," which gradually spread to all the neighboring district west of Eighth Avenue. Other nicknames such as "Sebastopol" and "Battle Row" were applied to various other regions, but these have long since been forgotten.

Other gangs besides that of Hell's Brood made the quarter notorious in its early days. The rendezvous of the "Forty Thieves" was the hold of an old derrick sloop stationed at the foot of Forty-sixth Street. On the deck of the sloop was a windlass, worked by a horse, for hoisting stones from lighters to the shore. By its aid the Forty Thieves hid in the hold of this sloop all manner of loot from whatever sources, much of it from the cars of the Hudson River Railroad.

We have spoken of the uprising of the draft rioters against the Negroes in 1863. The same mob at that time made an attack upon the Hudson River Railroad.* The affair has been adduced as showing the popular sentiment against the railroad as far back as 1863, but the railway had already been in operation over ten years and the attack was probably merely due to the unreasoning mob desire to wreck and burn, a desire which may have been increased by the fact that the railroad seemed to be an agency for conveying to the front the unfortunate men drafted for the army. Cer-

* New York *Tribune* and New York *Times*, July 12–15, 1863.

tain it is that the rioters were protesting against the $300 clause in the President's Draft Proclamation, which permitted the well-to-do to pay that sum and remain at home, but compelled the poor to go to the front. On July 14 and 16, 1863, the third and fourth days of the riot, the mob assembled at Fifty-ninth Street and marched down Eleventh Avenue, laying waste as they went whatever property met with their disapproval. They began with the tracks of the Hudson River Railroad, tearing up the rails and burning the ties. They burned houses and pillaged properties along the avenue. The newly erected ferry house at Forty-second Street, the property of Jay Gould at the time, was demolished, and the Allerton Hotel, occupied by cattlemen when in the city, a block further to the southward, followed the ferry house. These disorders were, however, but a transient tempest, the damages were soon repaired, and the railroad continued in possession of its territory.

Much of the criminal history of the region is no doubt legendary. But the economic result of both real lawlessness and reported lawlessness has been the same. It is seen in the cheapening of property values and in the prevention of the better features of civic and social life from entering that portion of the city. Of all the quarters of Manhattan of a similar area it is the one containing the fewest agencies, civic, social, religious, or educational, for the refreshment and development of its citizens.

VII

SUMMARY

As we have seen, the region has never been an integral, closely knit part of the city life. In early days the hilly and isolated character of that portion of the land which was not swampy, its lack of roadways, its detached farm houses, and its long use as the summer residence of large landholders, set it apart from communication with the city to the south. Moreover, after the neighborhood began to be invaded by business, the nature of many of the enterprises was such as to prevent the neighborhood from being chosen for residence, except by those driven to live near their employment or by the down-and-out element that prevails in all large communities. Speculative and shyster building operations, absentee landlordism, and a leasehold land tenure have retarded the improvement of property and the erection of decent dwellings, and the disorderly human element has given a color and an environment to the region which have kept many of the better working people and the small business men from establishing their families or their enterprises here.

One of the most significant characteristics of the district is the changing nature of its industries. Many have moved away and others have taken their places. There are still open grounds suitable for factory sites

between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues, but whether they are likely to be built upon for industrial purposes cannot be foretold. The development of pier facilities has hardly begun, and it is equally impossible to forecast the future changes along the waterfront and the effect that these may have upon the conditions of life. Certainly, the impetus of a strong industrial era offering a higher type of occupation than is afforded by most of the establishments in this West Side district is needed to start new and better currents of life among the poorer people.

But while industrially the region is in a transition stage, this is not true of the people who live there. Factories move away but the people remain. They have accepted the conditions of their environment. If this is true of the more comfortable families, it is far more true of the very poor. Here and there are groups of indigent families who have sunk into a disheartening inertia, whose poverty exhibits the most ominous of signs—apathy. As the result of the municipal, industrial, and social neglect which has been their share, the people are content with their lot. To them Balzac might well have referred when he wrote, "People without wants are poor."

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An Italian Laundry Worker and Her Baby

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—

MOTHERS WHO MUST EARN

BY Susan
KATHARINE ANTHONY 1877-

WEST SIDE STUDIES

NEW YORK
SURVEY ASSOCIATES, INC.
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INTRODUCTORY

THIS report gives an account of a detailed study of a group of wage-earning mothers and a statement of the conclusions of the study. The group of women in question lived on the Middle West Side of New York in the district limited by Fifty-fourth Street on the north, Thirty-fourth Street on the south, Eighth Avenue on the east, and the North River on the west.

The report does not aim to measure the amount of wage-earning by mothers of families which exists in the district defined. For this purpose, a house-to-house inquiry would have been necessary and we were not prepared to make a canvass on so extensive a scale. The study, therefore, confines itself to an intensive survey of a limited number of cases with respect to wages, hours, regularity of work, and the effect of these upon health and family life. It was, however, important to know whether the problem of the necessity for wage-earning among mothers was characteristic of the field selected, and evidence on this head was forthcoming from a number of sources. Social workers in the neighborhood declared that the working mother was an ever-recurring problem. The women of the tenements said that it was common for their neighbors to work out. One tenement mother—herself a scrubwoman in a hospital—informed the visitor that every woman in the twenty-family house where she lived worked away from home more or less regularly.

The informal evidence of residents is corroborated by the results of certain investigations carried on recently within the district. In the statistics of the schools of the Children's Aid Society for 1910–1911, the number of children whose mothers were at work is reported for all the schools, including the two within the West Side District. Of the 554 pupils in the Fifty-third Street school, 29.6 per cent, and of the 572 pupils in the Thirty-eighth Street school, 36.4 per cent were the children of mothers who worked out.* A study of juvenile delinquency on the West Side, made by the Bureau of Social Research, found that in 222 families dealt with, 39.2 per cent of the mothers were wage-earners.†

Having ascertained that the district here described was suitable for an inquiry of this character, a list of addresses was obtained for purposes of investigation. Especial pains were taken to secure these from as great a variety of sources as possible: the day nurseries, kindergartens, schools, settlement and church clubs, the Charity Organization Society, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, the Child Labor Committee, the Special Employment Bureau of the Young Women's Christian Association. Altogether about 18 different agencies were visited for addresses. Workers were also sought out at their places of employment; that is, at the theaters, department stores, laundries, office buildings, etc., within the district or near it. In this way a wide range of ages, occupations, and family types was secured. Because of the variation in oc-

* Unpublished data, compiled by Mr. M. P. Adams, superintendent of schools of the Children's Aid Society, New York City.

† See Boyhood and Lawlessness. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

cupation represented by the cases studied, they may be regarded as typical in a sense that the cases of women in selected trades could not be. In the latter there would be more uniformity as to hours and wages and conditions of work, and conclusions drawn from them would be applicable only to the trade in question.

The total number of wage-earning mothers whose cases were studied was 370. Of this number, 237 were visited to secure information for this particular inquiry. The remaining 133 cases were studied through records of families obtained for other investigations of the Bureau of Social Research.*

The information desired could be supplied only by the women themselves, and the collection of all the facts needed meant the expenditure of a great deal of time in visiting. About 50 of the women were seen from time to time for more than a year. Many of the calls had to be paid in the evening, after the women had returned from the day's work. Office scrubwomen could be found at home during the day, and theater cleaners have two or three hours for their own housework while the matinee is in progress. To say that they could be found at home at this hour is not to say, by any means, that they could be found at leisure. When one considers the amount of work done by these women in one day—the washing, ironing, house cleaning, mending, dressing and feeding of the children, in addition to the day's work outside—one realizes that it is a working

* Those who, besides the writer, took part in the field work of the investigation, were Miss Ruth F. Waldo, Miss Zaida E. Udell, and Miss Eleanor Sparkes. The group of 133 cases was derived from collateral investigations conducted by Miss Ruth True, Mr. Thomas D. Eliot, and Miss Eleanor Adler. Supplementary field work on these cases was done by Miss Dora Sandowsky, who also assisted in the preparation of the tables.

day without a leisure moment. Under the circumstances, the lengthy interviews which are unavoidable in a study of this kind seemed almost an imposition. But in spite of this fact, the visitor met with unfailing kindness and hospitality. "Sure, it's only when you come that I sit down," was a frequent remark. As a rule, however, the women worked as they talked—mending stockings, paring potatoes, ironing the family wash, bathing the children and putting them to bed, or attending to any one of a thousand duties that could not wait.

Besides the interviews held in the homes and with the families, calls were made at many of the places of employment in order to observe at close range the work done and attendant conditions. The principal local laundries were visited to verify statements as to conditions and processes.* Similarly, the work of waitresses in department stores and restaurants was studied by personal observation. However, more time and attention were given to the work of cleaners in large buildings than to any of the other occupations. There were two reasons for thus emphasizing public cleaning. First, this class of work is largely followed by women in the district; and, second, there has been no previous inquiry into the work of charwomen in buildings used for business purposes. To collect information on this head, practically all the theaters and opera houses of importance, several large office buildings and department stores, and one of the largest Pullman car yards were visited and the methods of cleaning carefully observed.

* For report of an investigation of sanitary conditions in the factories of this district made by fellows of the Bureau of Social Research, see Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 301.

Usually the superintendent of the cleaning force was interviewed. Almost all of the places were employing, or had employed, some one or more of the women visited. The schedule used in the inquiry was that adopted in the Bureau of Social Research for family and individual histories. It consists of three forms, copies of which are given in Appendix A.

The title "Mothers Who Must Earn" was selected as the most accurate one for the subject. To describe them as the "gainfully employed" would have implied a discrimination against labor in the home as productive work, which married housekeepers who do not receive wages justly resent. On the other hand, "working mothers" might just as well have included the toiling housekeeper one flight up or down from the selected case. Much of the work done by the women was temporary and casual, but it was paid for in wages and not in kind. If some of the women were not working when visited, this only meant that they were looking for a job and was indicative of the irregularity of their employment. All of them were either supplying the entire yearly income of the family or supplementing it by their earnings.

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD OF THE WEST SIDE MOTHER

THE lives of the families whose circumstances are reviewed in this study are peculiarly bound up with their environment. One can fancy some Jacques of the West Side reviewing the seven ages of man as they are lived by thousands around him. The infant, born and nursed in the dark tenement room; then the school boy spending a few years in some numbered "P. S." to learn for a brief season from some nameless "Teacher"; the adolescent making love on a Tenth Avenue corner; the young adventurer risking his life in a gang fight or in a game of street baseball; the workingman with a growing family, who takes a drink to forget his troubles; the derelict, old at forty, finding it hard now to get a job; and then the grandfather, house-bound, minding his daughter's baby while she goes out to do a day's work,—such are perhaps the scenes in which he might shadow forth the "strange, eventful history" of the citizen of the West Side.

Not all members of the family are thrown back alike on the resources of their immediate environment. The father has glimpses of the world, even if only from the driving seat of his truck. The son or daughter may go to work downtown, and though it costs 10 cents a day in carfare, the young worker has thus a daily glimpse of something beyond the West Side. It is the

mother of the family who least often sees beyond the neighborhood limits. Even the mothers who work away from home seldom journey far to a job. They cannot afford to spend the time in traveling back and forth, and they cannot afford to pay carfare out of their wages. They are even less adventurous in seeking recreation. A woman of thirty-five replied, when I asked her if she had ever seen Riverside Park, "No, dearie, I was never above Sixtieth Street in my life."

The close relation existing between the conditions of the neighborhood and the people who live there makes it necessary for us to describe briefly the district itself. We shall therefore glance at some of the salient features —racial, physical, industrial, social, and moral—which influence the group of families whom we shall later study in detail.

The basis of population is German and Irish and the social order reflects the racial characteristics of both. To the Irish comes an admixture of English and Scotch. Each group preserves to some extent its native habits and morals, the more serious German dwelling side by side with the easy-going Irishman. The characters of Gerhardt Hauptmann's sociological dramas live under the same roof with those of John Galsworthy. Teamster Henschel, with his dark rebellion, and Timson, the cab driver and drunken philosopher, meet as neighbors on the common stairs. Nowhere is the difference between the German and the Irishman more strikingly revealed than where the effects of long continued poverty and drink are to be observed. The German poor man tends to cruelty, and the Irishman to brutality. In German homes were tragedies unrelieved by humor, and in Irish homes, brutalities enhanced by an

easy-going acceptance. The German wife under the influence of want and overwork tends to melancholy, while the Irish wife slides down into indifference and slovenliness, and sometimes takes to drink.

In the second generation, the Irish and Germans have largely intermarried. There has always been religious agreement between them—the majority of the Germans having sprung from the Roman Catholic districts of Southern Germany *—and this agreement has facilitated their union. The newer Italian element they regard as strangers and aliens. An Irish woman, herself born in County Cavan, for instance, commonly refers to her Forty-sixth Street Italian neighbor as a "foreigner." The Poles and Greeks who are beginning to settle in the district are not merely aliens; they are interlopers. Their advance is resisted on every side. Hence the newer arrivals live in more or less closed "colonies," with peculiar languages, social customs, and standards of living.

The population of the district, consisting in 1910 of about 110,000 people, is housed in 80 oblong blocks. The elevation is comparatively uniform; the streets are straight and parallel; the houses vary but little in height. Climb up five or six flights to the top of any one of them, and go out upon the roof through the scuttle. On all sides stretches a dull rusty prairie of roofs. Only a few tall chimneys relieve the monotony of the view, for this region is not as yet marked by the presence of large, modern manufacturing plants. The sky line on the eastern border of the district is broken by towering new office buildings, in comparison with

* See Cartwright, O. G.: Historical Survey of the Middle West Side. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. In preparation.

which its factory buildings seem old and shabby. The North River and the high Jersey banks close the view to the west. A flock of pigeons, flying up from a neighboring roof top, circle in the air, their colored breasts flashing in the sunshine. Slowly they return and settle upon the same roof they left, singling it out from the hundreds of rusty housetops. These flocks of city-loving birds furnish a touch of color and romance in the dingy neighborhood.

The loss of the picturesque element has not been made up by the addition of comfort and convenience as has been the case in not less monotonous but more luxurious sections of New York. The neighborhood seems like the great neglected back yard of the rest of the city. Much of the cast-off clothing and refuse food from better streets find their way thither. At the Salvation Army headquarters half-worn garments can be bought for nominal prices,—an overcoat for 25 cents, a pair of shoes for 10 cents. Under the Ninth Avenue Elevated on Saturday night the push-carts of "Paddy's Market" display great heaps of vegetables, fruits, and other wares rejected from better quarters. Everywhere there are "seconds"—oranges that have been frozen, nicked dishes, faulty shoes and garments—to be bought for next to nothing. During the day, the peddler carts similar wares up and down through the streets, filling the neighborhood with his hoarse cry and selling his load for what he can get.

In the poorest quarters are families that almost live on waste. The children forage for wood, coal, and ice along the railroad tracks and among the warehouses, and the mother brings home from work gifts of clothing and fragments of food. It is surprising how large a part

of the minimum necessary to support life on the West Side can be picked up from the streets by boys and girls whose hunting instincts have been sharpened by necessity.

Segregated from the greater houses and the grander streets of the city, the West Side lives its own life in its own way, working when it must and snatching its pleasures where it may. Old houses, poor and costly transportation facilities, and human inertia combine to produce an isolated, overgrown village. Its numerous rear tenements give it the stamp of neglect and sordidness. Living in these little rear houses are the most conspicuously underpaid workers of the community,—irregular earners of both sexes bringing in just enough to keep soul and body together.

Congestion of population, as that term is understood in Manhattan, is not extreme, the density being only about one-half that of the most congested ward in the city. Frequently, however, from eight to 20 families occupy the same house, dwelling in identical compartments, using the same stairway and front door, flocking on the same threshold on hot summer nights for a breath of fresh air. The word "neighborliness" ceases to suggest a virtue to the women of the tenements. They will declare self-righteously that they do not "bother with their neighbors, but keep themselves *to* themselves."

Families with children tend to congregate in the same house. There are some landlords who make a point of not renting to large families, and others who, having once admitted a number of children, are satisfied that the whole house shall be given over to them. For example, a five-story tenement in Fifty-first Street houses

10 families that muster among themselves but two children, while a certain house on Eleventh Avenue has 15 children living on the top floor alone! Needless to say, the houses where the most children live are no better adapted for their presence than are the others. A tenement with a roof garden or any other sort of children's garden is not to be found in the district. As for the admirable "Children's Houses" which are beginning to appear as a part of working-class tenements in certain foreign cities, such things are apparently undreamt of for the little people of the West Side. In the meantime, they have only the common halls and the streets for a playground, and where they live the street door always stands open. It is not surprising that sober middle age goes about looking for a house with a locked front door, where "there ain't such a raft of children."

Removals from flat to flat are frequent, but the family seldom wanders more than a few blocks at a time, and sometimes proceeds in a circle, like a man lost in the woods, back to the original dwelling. Remarks like the following are typical: "I was born on the block." "When I came to America, twenty-five years ago, I landed in this house." "One of Michael's teachers is the same as taught me." Many families whose circumstances would warrant removal to better surroundings are held fast by old habits and associations. Yet many of these men and women, it must be noted, once had the enterprise to journey from the old world to the new. Somehow they have lost it on the West Side.

The West Side is the home of stables. This is due to the fact that a large amount of unimproved property is

included within its limits, and wherever unimproved property exists, stables are likely to be built. To this district great numbers of draft horses, as well as many of their drivers, go home to sleep. Stables of all kinds are to be seen. Some, especially those on the river front blocks, are ramshackle wooden sheds, just large enough to accommodate a single team. Others are scattered along the cross streets, separated by only a thin partition wall from adjoining tenements, so that at night the occupants of the latter can hear the stamping of the horses in their stalls. Nearer Broadway are tall, storied barns, built of concrete, where the horses are sent up to bed in elevators.

Along Broadway, just east of the district, are distributed about 50 theaters and concert halls. This region contains also the principal hotels and restaurants of the city, as well as great numbers of small Sixth Avenue lunch rooms. In the Thirties are some of the largest department stores in the city. Along all these streets giant office buildings are rapidly multiplying. To this Broadway area, which includes the region commonly called "Longacre," * many of the West Side people go to look for work, as it has the great advantage of lying within walking distance of their homes. Hence the kind of work offered in the Longacre buildings determines to a large extent the occupations followed by residents of the district.

Industrially, this region is very largely the home of unskilled and casual labor—of men who are drivers and day laborers; of women who scrub and clean in private houses by the day or in public buildings by the week.

* See Cartwright, op. cit.

Mayer's Place

Unique for its grass plot. Janitress in the doorway

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Many families exist from year to year on the precarious earnings derived from odd jobs and day's work; for the West Side is a hotbed of unemployment.

Not only the women but also the men are in a class of labor which has hitherto been neglected. Very little attention has been paid to domestic and personal service or to transportation workers. No studies have been made. No legislation has been attempted in their interest. The hotel waiters' strike, which occurred while this investigation was in progress, brought to light for the first time conditions in this especial occupation. But outside this single spot of light the field of domestic and personal service is still a dark one.

There is evidence of a decrease during the past twenty years in the amount of skilled work done by the dwellers in this district. Indigenous to the West Side are the woodworking trades, the metal trades, and textile work. All of these have greatly declined in importance. It is true that one branch of the woodworking trade—the manufacture of pianos—has become the most important local industry, being the largest employer of male workers.* But aside from the piano factories, the woodworking establishments are small workshops. Textile work, a traditional occupation for women, has declined even more strikingly. The laundries now stand chief in importance among the trades employing women.

The commercial world which has grown up on the borders of the district seems to have sapped it of its industrial vigor and reduced the dwellers to the lowest

* Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 305. The information was gathered by fellows of the Bureau of Social Research.

ranks of those who fetch and carry in the service of commerce. One after another, spinning, knitting, and weaving mills have moved away.* Two large twine factories moved away less than ten years ago. A large carpet factory has likewise shifted to the country. Several knitting mills, including a plant which manufactured the once-popular "jersey," have passed out of existence. Some of the buildings thus vacated are now occupied by piano factories and laundries.

With the passing of the textile factories has gone also a considerable amount of home work. "Finishing" yarn for the knitting mills, knotting silk fringe, and making bead and passementerie ornaments of all kinds are instances of home work formerly common. The German women did chair caning. The Brewster Carriage Factory, which has also passed away, once gave out its rattan carriage seats to be woven by the women in their tenement homes. Some work, such as finishing paper boxes, has been taken inside the factory by improved machinery. On the whole, the Americanized German and Irish women are too independent to allow themselves to be exploited at home work. If they must work, they prefer outside wage-earning, as they know that they get a better return for their time.

From Mrs. Dooley,† who was born in the district of North-of-Ireland parentage forty-five years ago, I received many shrewd observations on the changing industrial order about her. She and her sister worked as girls in West Side knitting mills. Mrs. Dooley's employer was a Lancashire man who had set up a shed in Fifty-second Street, and her sister worked at a rival

* See Cartwright, op. cit.

† All names used in this book are fictitious.

shed in Fifty-first Street on the site now occupied by a steam laundry. They continued in the same places until they were married. Neither had returned to factory work since. Mrs. Dooley, however, had been for twenty years janitress in the house where she lived and by this means paid the rent. Her husband kept in steady work running a freight elevator; the son of eighteen worked very irregularly as a driver. A daughter had just arrived at working age, and Mrs. Dooley was at a loss to know where she should try to find employment for the girl.

These sisters deplored the disappearance of the textile mills from the neighborhood. "They were nice places for the girls to work," said Mrs. Dooley. "Agnes and I made good money and we could go home to a hot dinner every day. The way it is now, if a girl don't want to work in the laundries, she's got to travel so far to get any other kind of work she can't come home at noon. She has to pay 10 cents for carfare and 15 cents for lunch, and that makes a quarter every day. The laundries around here are no place for a young girl to work. There was a different class of girls in the mills. Young girls like my Annie there used to go in the mills and stay there till they were married. They weren't like the girls now, changing around all the time. Many of them would come back as widows and could make a living there. You never heard of widows having to put their children away in those days."

Notwithstanding the fact that this section was once the seat of the textile trades, and that these trades have always been the stronghold of married women in industry, there is no local tradition favoring wage-earning by married women. The wife of the West Side working-

man does not earn because she wishes to be independent. The idea is foreign to her experience. She feels fully entitled to her husband's wages, and it is one of her grievances that he does not hand over enough of his pay. The American atmosphere has created in the more ambitious of them a desire for respectability and the appearances of respectability. Not to work is a mark of the middle class married woman, and the ambitious West Side family covets that mark. Hence comes the attempt to conceal the mother's employment, if she has one, which is one of the little snobberies of the poor.

Mrs. Garrety worked all day in a milk station and cared for husband and children besides. Coming home from work one evening, she found a sailor's suit cut out of cambric lying on the bed. Her youngest son explained that she was to make up the suit for him to wear in a school entertainment, and that the Sisters had cut out the costumes for the mothers of the small actors to finish. "Sister said," the boy added, "if any of our mothers worked, for us to hold up our hands, and she wouldn't send the suits home, but would have them made. I didn't hold up my hand. I wasn't going to tell them that you worked." Mrs. Garrety sighed but accepted the point of view as undebatable. She completed the sailor's suit by sitting up late at night, and considered it a small sacrifice to bring to the altar of family pride.

Furthermore, when the women go out to look for work they find that their families are a handicap. For this reason many of them conceal their home conditions and give their names with the prefix "Miss." However, it is not my observation that this prejudice against them on the part of employers is well grounded. Be-

cause of their greater age, experience, and responsibility, the older women try harder and take their work more seriously than unmarried girls. What Nora Tully, a waitress, said of herself is true, no doubt, of many others. "When I first worked at Story's I didn't try extra hard, because I always thought 'Oh, I'll be getting married soon.' But since I came back a year ago, when John was laid off his engine, I've worked hard and put my brains in it, I can tell you."

Against the somber background of West Side conditions, the group of women forming the basis of this study stood out in distinct relief. It was not only because we focused attention on the simple realities of their lives that these women seemed better than their environment would have led us to expect. The fact that the women were working qualified them at once for respect. They had had the enterprise to find work and the industry to keep it. They had not "put their children away," but were making every effort to keep up a home. Their determination to shoulder their obligations and meet the responsibilities was nothing short of heroic. To a large extent, they represented the best standards and the best elements of West Side life.

CHAPTER II

THE ECONOMIC FAMILY

CONJUGAL CONDITION OF THE MOTHERS

THE condition of the family depends primarily on the condition of the principal breadwinner. Whether the father is dead or absent, or whether he is living at home and is unemployed or at work, will roughly determine the economic circumstances of the family. For the sake of greater accuracy, the 370 women studied are here divided into six groups,—those whose husbands were withdrawn from the family through death, desertion, or separation forming three of them, and those whose husbands were living at home in a state of incapacitation, idleness, or employment forming the remaining three. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of mothers in each group.

It must be noted that the distribution of women according to family status, shown by the table, is not representative of family conditions in the district. Naturally, the proportion of widows, deserted wives, and separated wives would be much higher among wage-earning women than in the general population of the locality. It must be noted also that "incapacitated" in the following table means invalidity through specific disease and not old age alone. Mere age as a test of incapacitation is difficult to apply. Whatever the man's years, he was not put into this class unless

his infirmities placed him there. Husbands were counted "idle" only when they had been out of work for at least a year. Among those "at work," many intermittent or irregular workers were therefore included. Men who worked only three or four days of the week, those who were out of work on account of

TABLE 1.—CONJUGAL CONDITION OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Group	Conjugal condition	MOTHERS	
		Number	Per cent
I	Widows	125	33.8
II	Deserted wives [a]	40	10.8
III	Separated wives	9	2.4
IV	Wives with incapacitated husbands	21	5.7
V	Wives with idle husbands	12	3.2
VI	Wives with husbands at work [a]	163	44.1
	Total	370	100.0

[a] Among the women visited were two who had formed irregular unions and were the mothers of illegitimate children. As one of them had been deserted and the other was still living with the father of the child, they were assigned respectively to the groups of deserted wives and wives with husbands at work.

illness or a strike, those who worked regularly at a low-paid occupation, and those who earned more but drank and did not "give their money in"—all these fell into the group "at work." In a district like the West Side, which offers so many opportunities for casual employment, it would be unfair and inaccurate to class as "idle" the men who were simply fitting into their industrial environment as they found it. Hence several men whose work histories for the year

showed long and repeated gaps were nevertheless assigned to the class of working husbands.

One-third of the women visited were widows. There were 125 of these fatherless families where the mother was compelled to perform the duties of two parents and to support wholly or partially a family of several persons on an income scantily adapted to the needs of one. To all these homes disease or accident had dealt a blow which had permanently altered the family structure. The deserting husband may return and take up his responsibilities once more; the loafer may reform and go to work; the man who has lost his job may find another next week or tomorrow—vague hopes like these play their part in the lives of the women whose husbands are still whole and sound.

But where disease and accident have done their work the situation of the family is comparatively static. It is true that the widow's children are growing on toward the day when they also will become wage-earners. The precariousness of the family's position is proportioned exactly according to whether that day is in the near or distant future. It is also true that the widow herself may remarry. This is by no means unlikely on the West Side where remarriages are frequent.*

The subject of marriage was frequently discussed, for the shrewd wisdom of the women on this head was not to be lost. It is not the fashion among them to speak in praise of "marriage life," as the Irish women say. "If I had it to do over, I'd never marry," was almost the universal remark. At first I set this down

* Of the 370 women visited, 10 per cent had already contracted second marriages. We may suppose that a certain proportion of the 125 widows will take second husbands. Indeed, there were several who were on the eve of doing so.

Fifty-five Years of Age and Forty-five Years of Toil

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as the conventional language of disillusionment, the kind of remark which the women thought proper for middle age to make. As I came to know them better, I realized that there was a much deeper reason. The strain of bringing up a family on the average workingman's wages, reduced as this is likely to be by unemployment, sickness, or drink, constitutes, indeed, the dark age of the tenement mother's life. It is not strange that the goodwill existing between husband and wife often gives way beneath it. "I tell my husband," said Mrs. Gurney, "it's not right for us to be quarreling all the time before the children. But it seems like we can't help it. He's so worried all the time and I'm so tired. If we were easy in our minds we wouldn't do it."

Occasionally there was a sad story of cruelty at the hands of a man degraded by drink or brutalized by every influence from his youth up. There were sordid stories such as are rehearsed daily in the domestic relations court. There were tales of men who, deprived by circumstances of everything but their power over wife and child, found their greatest pleasure in the exercise of this power; wretched types "who know no influence but that of force, no reason, and no gentleness, since these have never come their way; who know only that they must keep that little which they have, since that which they have not is so great and so desirable." *

Some of these sad histories ended in desertion or separation; 40 deserted wives and nine who had separated from their husbands were among the group

* Galsworthy, John: A Commentary: Demos, p. 39. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1911.

studied. Divorce is unknown on the West Side. Legal counsel is too expensive and the societies which furnish legal advice free to the poor are not willing to undertake this kind of case. Other histories equally grim or sad were only terminated by death. More than one woman candidly confessed that her husband's death had been a relief. Mrs. Brunig, a sincerely religious woman, said to me, "You may think we are having a hard time. But I don't mind it. It's nothing compared to what it was when Brunig was alive. I never had a happy day then."

In contrast to these dismal homes there were others where mutual affection and sympathy had survived every strain, and where one found instances of absolutely heroic loyalty on the part of a wife toward an unlucky husband. Some of the men were sick and a hospitable institution was waiting to receive them and relieve the over-burdened wife of this care and expense. Yet a woman would say, "He was good to his family as long as he had work. It's not as if he were a drinking man and wasted his money. I won't send him away now." And then there was Mrs. Cary whose husband's earnings fell so low—he was a longshoreman handicapped by hernia—that she started out to find work. The neighbors all said, "You'll spoil him." To which Mrs. Cary replied firmly and proudly, "Everybody knows their own best," and went her way.

But whether the situation has been relieved by good-will or aggravated by ill feeling, the strain of making a home for a family under the usual West Side conditions is a stern experience. The woman who has gone through it looks on a second marriage from a practical point of view based on something more than the nor-

mal amount of disillusionment which goes with the middle years even under happier conditions.

Few women are likely to be as extremely practical as Mrs. Cooley was in her second marriage. If her attitude seems somewhat materialistic, it must be remembered that Mrs. Cooley's life had been spent in the pursuit of food, clothes, and shelter, and not of ideals. Here is the story as she told it:

" My first husband was a hoisting engineer. It was easy work, but only a sober man could do it. Barney was sober enough—and jolly, too, when he wanted to be. He could make others laugh, but he only made me cry. He never drank, but he beat me. Even before I married him, up to the day of the wedding, I was always dreading it. The night before, I looked him in the eye and said, ' Barney McBride, will ye be good to me? ' I would have left him after Henry was born, but he was sickly and I knew he wouldn't live long. I took care of him till he died, but it's God's truth, I was glad when I saw him in his coffin.

" I was working over at the carpet factory at Greenpoint then, going all that way back and forth every day because I didn't want to break up my home. After awhile Samuel Cooley began to come around. He was a boiler maker. He'd be waiting at the gate of the factory when we come out at night and walk along with Maggie and me a ways. But I had had enough of marriage life. So I left the Greenpoint factory and come back to New York so's to get rid of him. Then I went to scrub in a hotel. But one day I come home and there was Samuel standing before the door. He told me he was married thirty-two years to his first wife and she never did a day's work outside her house all that

time. I left him waiting three months and then I married him in the fall. That was October. I didn't mind working in the summer, but when winter came I wished I had a husband so's I wouldn't have to go out."

As I have said, Mrs. Cooley's frankly materialistic attitude was unusual. The women were not as a rule inclined, as girl wage-earners generally are, to look forward to marriage as a means of escaping work. Experience had taught them better. They were more likely to marry for companionship.

Mrs. Grant, a middle-aged silk weaver and a shrewd observer of life, analyzed thus the motives of her own two marriages. "I was married the first time when I was only eighteen. Because my sister, a year younger than me, was getting married, I thought I couldn't let her beat me and took the first chance. It was just as well, too, for it kept me out of harm's way. After my husband's death I went back to the silk mill. The second time I married was thirteen years after the first time. I expected to go on working, but I wanted a good companion."

Perhaps in a worse plight than the widows was a small group of women, 21 in number, whose husbands were either sick or maimed, as in the case of Mrs. Cary. Each of these unfortunate men was an added responsibility for his wife. Besides requiring care and, in some cases, constant nursing, he made another member of a family which had to be supported on an income scarcely sufficient to supply the needs of one person.

CAUSES OF DEATH OR INCAPACITATION OF HUSBANDS

These two groups, widows and wives with ailing husbands, made 146 in all, or 40 per cent of the whole num-

ber of families. They were alike in that disease or accident had contributed to the peculiar family situation. The causes of death and incapacitation of husbands were as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—CAUSES OF DEATH OR INCAPACITATION OF THE HUSBANDS OF 146 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Cause of death or incapacitation	HUSBANDS			
	Deceased	Incapacitated	Total	
			Number	Per cent
Tuberculosis	46	6	52	35.4
Pneumonia	19	..	19	13.0
Work-accident	11	5	16	11.0
Heart disease	6	1	7	4.8
Insanity	..	5	5	3.4
Alcoholism	3	..	3	2.0
Liver diseases	3	..	3	2.0
Rheumatism	2	1	3	2.0
Paralysis	2	..	2	1.4
Cancer	2	..	2	1.4
Blindness	..	2	2	1.4
Appendicitis	2	..	2	1.4
Suicide	2	..	2	1.4
Typhoid	2	..	2	1.4
Diabetes	1	..	1	.7
Meningitis	1	..	1	.7
Asthma	1	..	1	.7
Intestinal obstruction	1	..	1	.7
Brain tumor	1	..	1	.7
Erysipelas	1	..	1	.7
Apoplexy	1	..	1	.7
Epilepsy	1	..	1	.7
Anæmia	1	..	1	.7
Softening of brain	1	..	1	.7
Cerebral hemorrhage	1	..	1	.7
Septicemia	1	..	1	.7
Homicide	1	..	1	.7
Lead poisoning	..	1	1	.7
Accidental drowning	1	..	1	.7
Unknown	11	..	11	7.5
Total	125	21	146	100.0

The striking rôle played by tuberculosis in this table is not to be overlooked. It had deprived, either through death or incapacitation, more than a third of the 146 families in this group of their principal breadwinner. Pneumonia stands second on the list as the cause of death. Thus, almost half of the deceased husbands had died of pulmonary diseases.

Of the 125 widows, 37 per cent had been rendered so by tuberculosis. This fact is significant in considering the condition of the family. The lingering nature of the disease makes it the heaviest possible drain on the family fortunes. The husband passes through a long period of incapacitation during which the wife is compelled to earn money for rent and food, to care for the children, and to nurse the invalid. If she has any credit whatever,—but this is rare,—she accumulates debts which wipe out the insurance money should it eventually come. All this means that the widow is finally left not only to take up the physical and financial burdens of the future, but to wipe out also the physical and financial arrears of the past. In families where widowhood means financial distress, it means double distress when tuberculosis has prepared the way.

Third on the list, and forming 11 per cent of all the cases in which the father was either dead or incapacitated, are the 16 cases of work-accidents. In five families, the fathers were partly or wholly incapacitated by injuries received while at work. In 11 cases, the accident had resulted in death. A closer examination of the nature of these accidents and of the occupations which were their source reveals the usual story of the disabled breadwinner and the uncompensated family.

Like tuberculosis, the work injury is a double affliction when it disables a man as a wage-earner and then leaves him, helpless or handicapped, to be supported by his family. Such was the case with James Hadley, a longshoreman, who worked on the White Star docks for eighteen years. One day, in handling a cotton bale, he was struck on the leg by the iron band, which burst and snapped like a great elastic. The wound caused an abscess, and Hadley became a cripple as a result. Haynes lost three fingers on his right hand in an engine explosion. Cary and Finney suffered from hernia caused by lifting on the docks. Compton, a circus performer, was permanently crippled by falling from a trapeze. Three of these men are able to do an occasional odd job. In the case of one of them, ruin of body had been followed by ruin of character, and the man had become a professional beggar.

The tale of the 11 men who had been killed at work, briefly told, is as follows: Stires, working in an electric power house, was caught by a moving belt. Carroll, a longshoreman, was struck by a falling load as the rope on the hoist broke. Gates was killed by falling into the space for the fly wheel of the machine he was cleaning. Reddy was killed by his own locomotive. Kerwin and Sullivan both fell from scaffolds. Mallery, a dock laborer, was drowned. McKinney, a driver in the street cleaning department, slipped from the edge of his cart on an icy day in March, and Wells, a truck driver, fell from his wagon. Deely, working in a foundry, was caught in an unguarded machine. Lane was struck by a truck in excavation work.

Of these 16 families whose breadwinners were injured or killed, only two received any compensation. Mrs.

Stires, by the advice of her husband's fellow-workers, sued "the Company" and received $1,000, of which $250 went to the lawyer who conducted her case. The remainder kept Mrs. Stires and five children in rent and sickness expenses during the next three years. Carroll, visited by an agent of his employers before he died, signed a paper of release for $100, and his wife got no more.

To the list of industrial accidents should be added the one instance of industrial disease—that of lead poisoning acquired in the plumber's trade.

Summing up, then, the cases of tuberculosis, pneumonia, work-accidents, and industrial disease, we find that these causes were responsible for fully 60 per cent of the total number of dead or disabled wage-earners. Only 40 per cent were covered by the long list of other causes given.

AGE OF LIVING HUSBANDS

In considering the question of the men's ages, we must remember that youth is short and old age comes early for people who earn their living by the exercise of muscular force. John A. Fitch found the Pittsburgh steel workers entering old age at forty.* A fact of frequent observation in the West Side tenements is the shocking decrepitude of men and women not over fifty years of age. Having begun to work in childhood, by the time they are fifty they are ready to stop at home and be supported by their children. One broken old man of fifty-two had behind him a working life of forty-five years, almost half a century of toil! He

* Fitch, John A.: Old Age at Forty. *American Magazine*, March, 1911.

was utterly worn out, but was earning 25 cents a day by selling papers. Until recently he had managed to hold his job as a baker at $12 a week by employing a helper at $4.00. This had reduced his wages to $8.00, but his wife went out to work and made up the sum. They had six children, and $12 a week was meager enough for their needs.

On the whole, however, the ages of the 245 living husbands did not run very high. Table 3 shows the number and per cent of specified age periods.

TABLE 3.—AGES OF LIVING HUSBANDS OF 245 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Age	HUSBANDS	
	Number	Per cent
Less than 25 years	4	1.6
25 years and less than 30 years	17	6.9
30 years and less than 35 years	35	14.3
35 years and less than 40 years	58	23.7
40 years and less than 45 years	62	25.4
45 years and less than 50 years	40	16.3
50 years and over	29	11.8
Total	245	100.0

From the foregoing table it will be seen that 72 per cent of the men were under forty-five years of age, 16 per cent between that and fifty, and only 12 per cent fifty years of age or older. Thus only a small percentage of the men had arrived at a time of life where they might loaf with an approving conscience. As a matter of fact, I found only one man who seemed to be claiming the privilege of his years—he was fifty-three—and

willing to depend on his daughter's earnings in the factory for support. Of the 29 men who had passed the fifty-year mark, five were incapacitated and six had long been absentees or deserters. The remaining 18, except for the pensioner above mentioned, were all working intermittently or regularly. Several of the men by marrying late had reached their declining years before their children were old enough to earn.

A second view of the men's ages is given in Table 4.

TABLE 4.—AVERAGE AGES OF LIVING HUSBANDS OF 245 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO DOMESTIC CONDITION OF WIFE

Domestic condition of wife	HUSBANDS	
	Number	Average age in years
Deserted or separated wives	49	38.7
Wives of incapacitated husbands	21	42.8
Wives with idle husbands	12	40.8
Wives with husbands at work	163	39.5
Total	245	39.7

In none of these groups can the average age be regarded as high. Let us compare them, for instance, with the corresponding groups of husbands in the recent federal report on woman and child wage-earners in the cotton textile industry. In this report the average age of non-contributing fathers in families in which the mother or children under sixteen were at work was found to be fifty and two-tenths years in New England,

and fifty-one and one-tenth years in the South.* Since the non-contributors were counted as such by reason of desertion, sickness, or idleness, they correspond to the first three groups in the foregoing table, for whom the average age is but forty.

The difference is striking. The West Side fathers whose wives were earning were fully ten years younger than the non-contributing men whose wives and children were in the cotton mills.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE HUSBANDS

The working careers, whether long or short, of the 370 husbands, often showed a great many shiftings from one occupation or trade to another. Sometimes the change corresponded with removal from city to city or immigration from the "old country." Thus, for instance, a driver in the street cleaning department had been a plasterer in Boston; a longshoreman had followed in Germany the trade of a sausage maker; another longshoreman had been a tailor in Dublin; a street car motorman had been an iron molder in Denmark. On the other hand, it was not uncommon to find men who had never stirred from the West Side, but had worked along through a variety of occupations. The "drifting" which, as we shall see, characterizes boy and girl workers in this neighborhood, had apparently begun with an earlier generation.

A few examples from the records will serve to illustrate what the past life of those men had been and the stages by which they had arrived at their condition at the time of the investigation.

* Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage-earners in the United States. Vol. I, Cotton Textile Industry, pp. 441–442. United States Senate Document No. 645.

George Lyon; American; age, 57. As a youth, learned the gasfitter's trade and worked at it for a number of years. Later worked in Devoe's paint factory. Left this to take a job as poultry butcher. Now looks back on this as the "nicest work he ever had." Has been a longshoreman for eighteen years. Went into longshore work because he wanted outdoor employment. When asked for his idea of a good job, he replied, "outdoor work from 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. and $10 regular every week."

William Ryan; American; age, 38. Worked nine years as a knitter in the mills at Amsterdam, New York. Came to New York and was bell boy in a fashionable men's club. Elevator man in same office building for six years. Lost this position because he refused to share with the superintendent of building "the money that he got for being obliging." The owner of building at first promised to place him in another position under a different superintendent, but failed to make good his promise. When last seen, Ryan was trying to get back his old job in the knitting mills.

Peter Farrand; Irish; age, 54. Has been a waiter for the greater part of his life. Worked fifteen years at last place, the Parker Hotel. Lost an eye while chopping kindling in the basement of the tenement in which he lived. A splinter flew up and penetrated the ball. Farrand continued working three years at the hotel after this accident, wearing a glass eye. But the remaining eye was affected and gave him much trouble by watering constantly. Was at last compelled to give up his job. "You can't be attending to your eye while you're waiting on people at the table." Has worked since at odd jobs, as a street laborer. Could get work on the sand piles at the docks where his son works, but "you've got to have breath to keep up with the other men with your wheelbarrow." Now looking for a job as watchman.

John Richards; American; age, 24. Was a vaudeville singer before his marriage at twenty-one years. Filled Coney Island

engagements. Left this work when he married because "there was too much life in it for a married man." Has had only temporary jobs since as driver of an ice wagon, coal handler, and vegetable peddler. Has not yet ceased to look for a job when he has none, but shows signs of becoming a chronic loafer.

James Price; American; age, 28. Went to work in a Fourteenth Street bank at fifteen years of age. Stayed nine years and became assistant bookkeeper. Followed this by four years in another bank as bookkeeper at a salary of $25 weekly. Two years after his marriage was discharged for over-drawing his account, but was given a letter of recommendation. After this worked three months as carpenter's helper and three months canvassing for a news agency. His wife petitioned the bank to take him back and the bank consented. But Price now refused to do anything but outdoor work. At present employed as solicitor for a tea and coffee company.

Charles Malloy; American; age, 48. Was born "on the block"; married and lived there all his life. Until recently had never worked more than two blocks from home. Was employed in the Higgins carpet factory until it moved away. Then in slaughter house as butcher until forty years of age. Had become unfit for the work through corpulency. Since then has had odd jobs as watchman on unfinished building. "But when the building is finished, then I'm out," he explains.

Edward Scully; American; age, 33. Cab driver. Worked eleven years for the same company. Nine years ago was laid up several months with rheumatism and developed anchylosis in the right hip. This did not disable him as a cab driver; but when his employers replaced their cabs with motor cars it was found that Scully's lameness made it impossible for him to become a chauffeur. Out of work three months; then took a job driving truck for a bottle company.

Karl Reber; German; age, 31. Was a bookkeeper in Berlin; nine years with the same firm. In coming to America followed the example of a friend who had done well in New York. Reber and his wife were employed in a hand laundry on their arrival, both doing the same work, washing, starching, ironing, etc. Received their board and a lump sum of $5.00 weekly. Reber soon found a situation as bookkeeper for a German firm at $12 a week. Remained two and one-half years with firm and left because a promised increase in salary was not granted. "He thought he *might* be out a week," said his wife. "That was four months ago." His wife has just secured work for him as a scene-shifter in the theater where she worked as cleaner. Reber earns $6.00 for eight performances weekly. For rolling a drum to simulate thunder whenever the regular drummer fails to appear he receives an extra dollar. Reber and his wife take a cheerful view of their situation, which they regard as only temporary and expect to better.

Fred Reich; German-American; age, 48. Drove a wagon for his father, who had a tobacco store in the district. After father gave up business, Reich drove for different stores and worked as a laborer on a railroad construction job in Pennsylvania. For six months of past year worked in a tin can factory, sweeping up tin cuttings, for $6.00 a week. Now does odd jobs, driving and kalsomining. "Sometimes has four days a week and sometimes less." Trying to get work in the street cleaning department.

Paul Shroh; German; age, 49. Came to America at the age of fourteen and learned the iron-molder's trade. Was employed fifteen years in a West Side foundry. Subsequently drove a wagon for a furniture store several years for $10 a week. For two years past has had only odd jobs. Suffers from iritis and varicose veins, and his age is against him in finding employment. Has always been a drinker, but the habit has grown worse since he has been out of work.

Thomas Mann; American; age, 50. Was born in Virginia. "His folks must have been nice people," said Mrs. Mann. "They were Methodists and he tells how the boys' clothes were laid out for them on Sunday morning and how they went off to Sunday school with a flower in their buttonholes." His father kept a grocery store and the boy helped him. Worked as a grocer's clerk in Atlanta. Acquired the wandering habit and "bummed" his way through the South and West. Came to New York eventually and opened a small butter and egg store, but soon failed in business. Worked as waiter in a restaurant, as porter in a department store, and as hostler. Is out of work more than half the time.

Charles Wood; English; age, 39. Came to America twenty-three years ago, and, like his wife, has always been a silk warper. Has stuck to his trade, but, on the other hand, has seldom remained long in one place, going from mill to mill in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Since his marriage, five years ago, has continued his wandering life, leaving his wife to support herself and their child during his absences.

David McCarthy; Irish-American; age, 27. Born in New York; taken to Ireland by parents at age of eight and returned to New York at fifteen. Went to school during this period in Ireland. First occupation, tallier in a lumber yard. Later, driver for a West Side grocer for a year. Bell boy and elevator boy in a series of clubs and apartment houses, never holding any place long. Last job, that of watchman on railroad, lasted three months. Out of work a year. Hopes to get a place in street cleaning department.

Gustav Nieman; German; age, 35. Served three years' apprenticeship as waiter in Germany. Came to New York fourteen years ago. Worked eight years in the same restaurant and became head waiter. Lost this place two years ago, when management decided the head waiter must speak French as well as German and English. He had not drank

TABLE 5.—OCCUPATIONS OF THE LIVING AND DECEASED HUSBANDS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	HUSBANDS			Occupation	HUSBANDS		
	Living	Deceased	Total		Living	Deceased	Total
Professional service:				*Trade and transportation:*			
Teacher	..	2	2	Driver	48	24	72
Superintendent of institution	1	..	1	Longshoreman[a]	13	3	16
				Merchant and dealer	15	1	16
Total	1	2	3	Clerk	3	6	9
				Salesman	8	..	8
Domestic and personal service:				Hostler	5	2	7
				Porter	4	2	6
Laborer	26	14	40	Chauffeur	3	2	5
Waiter	8	6	14	Bookkeeper	2	2	4
Bartender	5	5	10	Fireman	4	..	4
Elevator man	5	1	6	Foreman	2	2	4
Cook	4	1	5	Stage hand	3	..	3
Watchman	3	2	5	In express business	..	2	2
Janitor	4	..	4	Ship officer	..	2	2
Street cleaner	2	1	3	Street-car motorman	2	..	2
Barber	1	1	2	Agent	1	..	1
Bootblack	2	..	2	Brakeman	1	..	1
Saloon keeper	2	..	2	Car inspector	..	1	1
Dish washer	1	..	1	Engineer (locomotive)	..	1	1
				Gate-tender	..	1	1
				Peddler	1	..	1
				Street-car conductor	1	..	1
				Typewriter	1	..	1
Total	63	31	94	Total	117	51	168

[a] In the United States Census of 1900, longshoremen were included under "Domestic and Personal Service." They are here classed as Transportation Workers in accordance with the more recent classification of the Department of Labor of New York state.

TABLE 5—(CONTINUED)

Occupation	HUSBANDS		
	Living	Deceased	Total
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:			
Mechanic	3	8	11
Iron worker	6	3	9
Painter	6	1	7
Plumber	5	2	7
Baker	4	..	4
Blacksmith	1	3	4
Butcher	4	..	4
Piano worker	4	..	4
Plasterer	..	4	4
Engineer (stationary)	1	2	3
Printer	..	3	3
Bricklayer	1	1	2
Button worker	2	..	2
Carpenter	1	1	2
Gasfitter	1	1	2
Leather worker	1	1	2
Machinist	1	1	2
Mason	1	1	2
Shoemaker	2	..	2
Silver plater	2	..	2
Stone cutter	1	1	2
Tinsmith	..	2	2
Tobacco worker	1	1	2

Occupation	HUSBANDS		
	Living	Deceased	Total
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits (continued):			
Wire worker	2	..	2
Wood worker	2	..	2
Bookbinder	1	..	1
Bottler	1	..	1
Butcher's helper	1	..	1
Caulker	..	1	1
Chewing gum factory worker	1	..	1
Cooper	1	..	1
Concrete layer	1	..	1
Gas-house worker	..	1	1
Gilder	1	..	1
Harness maker	1	..	1
Hatter	1	..	1
Marble finisher	1	..	1
Roofer	..	1	1
Silk warper	1	..	1
Slaughter-house worker	1	..	1
Tailor	..	1	1
Upholsterer	..	1	1
Total	64	41	105
Grand total	245	125	370

to excess before, but now he began to do so. His character appears thoroughly demoralized by idleness and drink. His wife, however, who is capable and industrious, seems sincerely anxious to help him to his feet and may succeed.

Let us now examine in detail the occupations of the 370 husbands, including the 125 deceased. Deceased husbands were entered according to their last place of work. The men who were returned as being unemployed were listed according to the last job held. Table 5 shows the occupations represented and the number of men in each.

One of the most important questions about wage-earning widows is, What was their economic position prior to widowhood? The foregoing table throws some light on this question. We find that about the same occupations had been followed by the 125 deceased husbands as by the 245 living husbands. The comparison is to be seen in Table 6.

TABLE 6.—OCCUPATIONS OF 245 LIVING HUSBANDS OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONS OF 125 DECEASED HUSBANDS

Occupation	HUSBANDS					
	Living		Deceased		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional service	1	.4	2	1.6	3	.8
Domestic and personal service	63	25.7	31	24.8	94	25.4
Trade and transportation	117	47.8	51	40.8	168	45.4
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	64	26.1	41	32.8	105	28.4
Total	245	100.0	125	100.0	370	100.0

This table illustrates but slight divergence between the occupations of the living and the deceased wage-earners. Roughly speaking, their occupations were distributed similarly between the three branches: domestic and personal service, trade and transportation, and manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. A somewhat larger percentage of deceased than of living wage-earners is found in the list of manufacturing occupations. The husbands of 33 per cent of the widows had been engaged in factories and mechanical work, while but 26 per cent of the married women had husbands in these occupations. This is perhaps to be accounted for by the fact that while industrial accident and disease are extremely common among laborers, drivers, and transportation workers generally, machinery and the building trades still take the heaviest toll.*

A further correspondence between the work of living and of deceased husbands is seen in the predominating occupation for each; the largest number of men engaged in a single occupation were drivers and the next largest, day laborers.

This correspondence shows that the economic position of the widows prior to their husbands' death was similar to the present position of the married women at work. Indeed, as we shall see later, many of the widows had to go to work even before they lost their husbands for the same reasons that the married women are now going to work. The chief difference between the economic position of the widow at present and prior to widowhood does not depend on whether she worked or not but on the difference of income

* New York State Commission on Employers' Liability. First Report, pp. 5 and 51. March 19, 1910.

during each of these periods. This subject of incomes and wages, however, will be left for a later chapter.

Considering now the 370 husbands as a group, we find them distributed over a great variety of occupations—79 in number. Trade and transportation engaged the largest number, 168, or 45.4 per cent. Next in order came manufactures, with 105, or 28.4 per cent. In domestic and personal service there were 94, or 25.4 per cent, and in the professions 3, or .8 per cent.

Looking more closely into the three principal classes, we find that within trade and transportation the drivers, 72 in number, compose the largest group. In domestic and personal service the day laborers form the principal group with 40. Thus 112 men, 30 per cent of the group, had irregular work. In manufactures no particular trade predominates, as the largest group includes but 11 men and the others are fairly well distributed throughout the list.

UNEMPLOYMENT

A very small number of the living husbands had been at work regularly during the year. Some had been out of work a month, some two months, some four months —not sick or ailing in body, but just *out of work*, that dreadful West Side affliction which is feared more than the direst sickness. Some of the women would speak of it as if it were an impersonal misfortune. "Do you know how long that man was out of work last winter?" said Mrs. Reinhardt. "Four months!" She had counted as you would count a pulse every day of the anxious gaps between her husband's successive jobs as

waiter. In the same way Mrs. Gilhooly reported the ill luck of her husband, a laborer. "My man hasn't done a tap of work for two months!"

Sometimes it strikes a man without a word of warning. His wife sees him coming home in the middle of the morning and she knows by his face what has happened even before he speaks. If she is apt at nothing else, she is quick to read the signs of this particular misfortune. Sometimes it strikes the family just when they have begun to entertain hopes and to make plans. The Gurneys had just moved into a four-room flat with rent at $16. They had formerly lived in a rear tenement, but Mr. Gurney, who was a cab driver, thought he was "in steady" for awhile. Then one day Mrs. Gurney, coming home in the afternoon, "saw his boots and his bandbox with his hat in the middle of the room." Mr. Gurney was nowhere about. He had gone out again after leaving these silent witnesses of misfortune. Mrs. Gurney threw herself on the bed and wept despairingly. The Gurneys were soon living in a basement.

"Laid off" and "fired" are familiar words in the family vocabulary. They are among the first Americanisms acquired by the immigrant workman and he can pronounce them with dreadful distinctness. A young Danish woman with gentle manners and refined habits had recently moved to the West Side and was learning English very slowly. In due course of time her husband lost his place, or, as she put it when I happened in on the very day of the disaster, "Me hoosband bin fired." In this grotesque and sad little statement lay the gist of all the dark possibilities now confronting the Carlsen family. Fortunately, however, these pos-

sibilities never arrived, for Carlsen was out only six weeks. In the meantime his wife took her children to the day nursery and did day's work.

Why had this group of ablebodied men been out of work off and on throughout the year?

The recent report of the New York State Commission appointed to study unemployment throws considerable light on these questions. The report quotes an investigation of unemployment made by an agent of the Charity Organization Society and the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, which found that "out of 1,933 men interviewed, 37½ per cent were unskilled laborers. The other well-represented occupations were teamster's work, longshore work, and the building trades, particularly house painting. There were also a good many cooks and waiters." *

The six occupations mentioned in the report as characterized by unemployment are very well represented among the husbands of our working mothers. The following table shows to what extent the 370 men, including the 125 deceased husbands, were engaged in these occupations.

From this table it will be seen that 54 per cent of the men were, or had been, engaged in work in which unemployment is characteristic.

Again referring to the report of the commission, we find that "about 40 per cent of our wage-earners suffer some unemployment every year, that on the average they lose ten weeks each, and that the loss in wages

* New York State Commission on Employers' Liability and other matters. Third Report, 1911. Unemployment and Lack of Farm Labor, p. 50.

amounts to 20 per cent of what the earnings would be were employment steady throughout the year." *

The West Side men of our study fall well within this class. They had suffered more or less unemployment during the preceding year. Many of them had lost 20

TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF LIVING AND DECEASED HUSBANDS OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ENGAGED IN OCCUPATIONS IN WHICH UNEMPLOYMENT IS CHARACTERISTIC

Occupation	HUSBANDS	
	Number	Per cent
Teamster (driver)	72	19.5
Building trade worker [a]	52	14.0
Laborer	40	10.8
Longshoreman	16	4.3
Waiter	14	3.8
Cook	5	1.4
Total	199	53.8
Other occupations	171	46.2
Grand total	370	100.0

[a] The group of men reported as "building trade workers" consists of 11 mechanics, 9 structural iron workers, 7 painters, 7 plumbers, 4 plasterers, 2 bricklayers, 2 carpenters, 2 gasfitters, 2 masons, 2 stone cutters, 1 concrete layer, 1 caulker, 1 marble finisher, and 1 roofer.

per cent of their time or even more. It is true that 20 per cent of the year is considered only a normal period for a paid vacation in a few occupations. But for these men, a vacation of one-fifth of the year taken

* New York State Commission on Employers' Liability and other matters. Third Report, 1911. Unemployment and Lack of Farm Labor, p. 69.

piecemeal or all at once, meant that the wife went to work to pay the rent and the family went hungry. "Up to the mark all day and every day," as Mr. Galsworthy points out, is the only successful formula for the workingman's existence.

Women who had worked intermittently all their lives usually continued to look upon their employment as temporary. The gradual demoralization through unemployment of men who have been steady workers for years is something for which they are unprepared. If they are convinced that the husband or son is really trying to get work and maintain a previous wage level, they are patient with his not accepting employment at a lower wage. The spirit which they find only natural in their husbands and sons, however, they themselves seldom try to imitate.

WORKING CHILDREN

The number of wage-earning children is a primary factor in the condition of the family which must be considered. Among the widows listed are some with children who have reached working age and whose combined earnings more than replace the deceased father's earning capacity. In such cases an advance in the standard of living, a lack of filial consideration on the children's part, or perhaps the continuance of the working habits of years on the mother's part keep her in employment even after the absolute necessity for it has passed.

While some mothers insist that the son's or daughter's pay envelope be turned over to them unbroken, others make a regular allowance of, say, a dollar a week. Those who require the unopened pay envelope do it

THE WAGE-EARNERS OF A FAMILY

The father is a cook and the mother a janitress. The boy is the oldest of four children

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partly as a matter of family discipline. "I'd like to see the child of mine that would open his own pay envelope," remarked a German mother, with a flashing eye. But the mother who is most rigorous in maintaining her maternal authority in this way is often most open-handed toward the boy or girl after the letter of the rule has been observed. She pays out more than the family income warrants in order to give her daughter a becoming dress and hat, and her son the pleasures of Sunday baseball or an extra "bite" between meals. "I can wear anything," is a common remark, "but Mamie must have a tailored suit." Or, "It costs me 25 cents every Sunday for Chrystie to go to the baseball." Or, "I tell my boy he's not to go hungry from carrying trunks up and down stairs all day, but to have a piece of pie and cup of coffee middleways of the afternoon."

The girls of the family give in their wages more regularly than the boys, and receive back a smaller portion for their own use. There is a strong temptation for both boys and girls to conceal the exact amount of their wages. For example, it is easy to forget to mention last week's raise of 50 cents. This lack of confidence between members of families at a financial level where their existence depends on family solidarity is surprisingly common. It is partly due to the fact that the typical family of the district, while co-operating on the necessities of life, does not co-operate on luxuries or pleasures. Recreation for the husband is one thing, for the wife another, and for the individual children yet something else. Hence each member tries to reserve from the common fund as much as possible for his individual pleasures—the saloon, the social club, a necktie

in the new shade, the coveted white flannel suit, a visit to the moving pictures, or whatever may represent the momentary heart's desire.

But notwithstanding personal deviations of all sorts, there is, as already stated, a prevailing standard for the contribution of working children. In the great majority of the families visited, the rule was for the children to give the full week's wages to the mother, and receive from her a daily allowance for lunch and carfare.

TABLE 8.—AGES OF 283 WORKING CHILDREN OF 170 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Age	CHILDREN	
	Number	Per cent
14 years	22	7.8
15 years	57	20.1
16 years	45	15.9
17 years	46	16.3
18 years	32	11.3
19 years and over	81	28.6
Total	283	100.0

The number of families assisted by the wages of boy and girl labor was somewhat less than half of the entire group. Of the 370 families 170, or 46 per cent, had working children, and 200, or 54 per cent, were without working children.

The total number of working children belonging to the 170 families was 283. Their ages are given in Table 8.

Thus 28 per cent of the working children were under sixteen years of age. In homes where circumstances are poor enough to force the mother into employment, the children naturally go to work as soon as the law permits.* There were very few cases where the mother was trying to keep children in school after they were able to qualify for work. For the majority of the women it required heroic efforts merely "to keep the family together." When shelter, food, and clothing are matters of insecurity, education is beyond the possible.

The occupations of the working boys of the families are seen in Table 9, on the following page.

From this table it may be seen that the largest group of boys, including 70 per cent of the total number, were engaged in trade and transportation. Nearly all of them were drivers and helpers on wagons, errand boys, or office boys—that is to say, "runners" of various kinds. Their jobs do not lead to promotions. The boys drift from one position to another, acquiring no particular ability at anything, and soon reach their maximum wage. Only 24 per cent of the boys were engaged in manufacturing occupations.

There are two reasons why so large a number of the youths were found in unskilled and futureless work. The same conditions that cause the mother to work make it difficult for her to stand out for advantageous employment for her children. They must take the first job that presents itself and consider themselves lucky

* The labor law of New York forbids (1) the employment of all children under fourteen, (2) the employment of children under sixteen except when permitted by a special employment certificate issued by the board of health. The certificate is granted upon presentation of proof of age and good health and the passing of simple educational tests.

TABLE 9.—OCCUPATIONS OF 172 BOYS IN THE FAMILIES OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	Boys
Professional service:	
Theatrical performer	1
Total	1
Domestic and personal service:	
Elevator boy	2
Laborer	2
Bell boy	1
Cook's boy	1
Door boy	1
Hairdresser's apprentice	1
Total	8
Trade and transportation:	
Driver	25
Errand boy	22
Office boy	20
Driver's helper	15
Clerk	8
Messenger	5
Handy boy in store	4
Stock boy	4
Chauffeur	3
Salesman	3
Cash boy	2
Fruit-stand helper	2
Newsboy	2
Fish dealer	1
News-stand keeper	1
Stage hand	1
Trade and Transportation (continued):	
Stenographer	1
Telephone lineman	1
Track cleaner	1
Total	121
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:	
Piano worker	8
Printer's helper	4
Metal worker	3
Plumber	3
Carpenter's helper	2
Plumber's helper	2
Tailor's helper	2
Blacksmith	1
Box factory handy boy	1
Bookbinder's apprentice	1
Carpet cleaner	1
Cleaner of moving picture slides	1
Draftsman's apprentice	1
Electrician	1
Iron worker	1
Jewelry designer	1
Laundryman[a]	1
Pattern folder	1
Painter	1
Sand blaster	1
Silk dyer	1
Shirt cutter's apprentice	1
Soap factory operator	1
Tinsmith's helper	1
Whitewasher	1
Total	42
Grand total	172

[a] In the United States Census of 1900, persons employed in laundries were included under "Domestic and Personal Service." As laundries have been legally classed as factories in the state of New York since 1901, the occupation of laundryman is here included under "Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits."

if anything offers. A second reason is simply that trade training is not available. Many of the women expressed themselves as eager for their boys to learn a trade and complained that opportunities were so rare. One mother, a widow with two boys, was very explicit on this point. Her husband had been a free mason and the boys were eligible for the Masonic Home at Utica. But Mrs. Grady refused to send them there. She could work for them and support them, she said, while they were little; but as soon as they were old enough to learn a trade, she supposed she would have to send them to the Masonic Home because vocational training is provided there. To give the boys this chance, and for no other reason, she was willing to send them away from her.

As we have seen, about one-fourth of the boys had gone to work in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Not all of these were on the way to learn a skilled trade. A mother likes to believe that her boy is learning and not treading a mill. Her optimism easily leads her to report him as an "apprentice" where he is in reality but a handy boy or messenger. She wants to believe in his progress and makes the most of his industrial outlook. "James just works on the piano strings," says his mother. "But he keeps his eyes open. He could do all of the processes on his floor, except one, and there's 14 altogether." It is hardly necessary to add that this hopeful spirit frequently does not outlast the boy's first job.

From the list of the girls' occupations given in Table 10 on the following page, it will be seen that the percentage in domestic service is a negligible one. Forty-one per cent of them work in stores and offices and 51

per cent in shops and factories. In the shops they are bundlers and stock girls,—little indoor "runners" corresponding to their brothers as outdoor "runners." In the offices they address envelopes and answer the telephone. In the factories they do light jobs, such as

TABLE 10.—OCCUPATIONS OF 111 GIRLS IN THE FAMILIES OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	Girls	Occupation	Girls
Professional service:		*Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:*	
Kindergarten assistant	1	Candy packer	10
Theatrical performer	1	Bookbinder	9
Total	2	Piano worker	5
Domestic and personal service:		Milliner	4
Domestic	3	Tobacco worker	4
Nursemaid	2	Dressmaker	3
Door girl	1	Sample mounter	3
Total	6	Biscuit packer	2
Trade and transportation:		Factory worker (unspecified)	2
Clerk	13	Hair-goods worker	2
Errand girl	6	Mangle girl [a]	2
Bundler	5	Silk worker	2
Cash girl	5	Bottle labeler	1
Salesgirl	5	Cloak model	1
Cashier	3	Drug packer	1
Theater attendant	3	Embroiderer	1
Stock girl	2	Feather sewer	1
Stenographer	2	Metal worker	1
Telephone operator	2	Pattern sorter	1
Total	46	Upholsterer	1
		Water-wing maker	1
		Total	57
		Grand total	111

[a] As laundries have been legally classed as factories in the state of New York since 1901, the occupation of mangle girl is here included under "Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits."

pasting, folding, sorting, and packing. It makes little difference whether they are in stores or factories. The character of their work is very much the same, involving light effort, monotonous performances, and protracted hours.

If the girls prefer a job in a store, it is mainly to avoid the factory stigma. Mothers who won't allow their daughters to work in factories declare that factory girls are "boisterous." Or if, perchance, the merciful job happens to be tending or feeding a machine, the mother will admit the nature of her daughter's work, but will add that her Annie doesn't "bother" with the other girls. Mrs. Honig held out long against the factory, but was at last compelled to let Stella take a job in the piano works. But she regarded the step as the downfall of all her ambitions for the girl, and she told of it with the tears streaming down her face.

The strength of this prejudice is recognized by the manager of a large pattern factory in the district who urges his employes to wear their hats to and from work so as to avoid being taken for factory girls. It is only a slight step in the direction of dignifying the atmosphere of his place. But he finds that it pays—in the kind of girls that he gets and the length of time they remain with him. Much more could be done in the same direction by providing dressing rooms for the operatives in order that they might present a proper street appearance on leaving the building. It is a literal fact that in most of the factories of the district the girls have no place to stow their hats during work hours. Better dressing room provisions would mean not only better health but increased self-respect. If they had but a small part of the lavish toilet facilities furnished

gratis by every department store to its customers, they might achieve that which contributes more to the sense of personal dignity of a working girl than any other single thing—a decent and proper street appearance.

Mrs. Hogan's Margaret was sitting on an upturned basket eating her lunch when the factory inspector came along. "Where is the wash basin on this floor?" asked the inspector. "Got none," said Margaret. "Dressing room?" queried the inspector. Margaret shook her head. "Towels? Mirror? Lockers?" "We got nothing," said Margaret, with a scornful laugh. To see the girls troop forth from this factory at noon and at 6 p. m. is sufficient evidence that Margaret spoke the truth. Hatless, bearing all the marks of factory toil, they pour out into the street, their relaxed behavior reflecting their dishevelled appearance. It is no wonder the women of the neighborhood declare that the girls are "wild" in this factory and that they "would sooner die than let their daughters work there."

Comparison of Boys' and Girls' Occupations

An examination of the columns giving the occupations of boys and girls separately shows that the distribution by trades is by no means the same for the sexes. Table 11 is a graphic presentation of the difference.

From this table it appears that the boys have a strong tendency toward trade and transportation, and the girls, though to a less marked degree, toward the factories.* It happened in many families that the brother was doing an outdoor job, such as driving or delivering goods, while the sister was a packer or operator. This

* See True, Ruth S.: The Neglected Girl. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

division seemed to represent the two lines of least resistance for the hard-pressed mother of the West Side.

TABLE 11.—OCCUPATIONS OF 172 BOYS IN THE FAMILIES OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONS OF 111 GIRLS

Occupation	BOYS		GIRLS	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional service	1	.6	2	1.8
Domestic and personal service	8	4.7	6	5.4
Trade and transportation	121	70.3	46	41.4
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	42	24.4	57	51.4
Total	172	100.0	111	100.0

Unemployment Among Boys and Girls

We now pass to the subject of unemployment among the boy and girl workers of these families. It was found that 8.1 per cent of the girls were out of work at the time of the visit and 16 per cent of the boys.

Two facts help to account for the greater percentage of idle boys. One is that so many of them, as we have seen, are in outdoor work, such as driving, which is often irregular, if not casual, in character. Another reason is the boy who "won't work." There are also girls on the West Side who "won't work," but they are rarer than the boys and they do not appear in the records of this particular group of families. On the other hand, the mention of a "wild son" is not uncommon. "I have two good sons and one wild one," a mother is quoted as saying, as if the two classes of sons were too wellknown to need explaining.

It is from this group of boys, precipitated into wage-earning at the age of fourteen without training or preparation of any kind, following occupations that are irregular and unskilled, that the future husbands of wage-earning mothers are made.

NATIONALITIES

As we have said in the foregoing chapter, the Germans and Irish of the neighborhood are strongly Americanized and tend to coalesce. In the particular group of families studied, this neighborhood condition was reflected. The nationalities of husbands and wives were secured separately in order to ascertain whether there were any instances of intermarriage between races with conflicting ideals of home life—a situation which would naturally tend to make of the mother a wage-earner.

TABLE 12.—NATIONALITY OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, AND OF THEIR HUSBANDS, LIVING AND DECEASED

Nationality	Wives	Husbands	WIVES AND HUSBANDS	
			Number	Per cent
American . .	79	80	159	21.5
Irish-American .	44	41	85	11.5
German-American.	45	32	77	10.4
Irish . . .	95	76	171	23.1
German . . .	36	43	79	10.7
English . . .	16	28	44	5.9
Italian . . .	19	21	40	5.4
Other nationalities	36	49	85	11.5
Total . . .	370	370	740	100.0

In the above table the distribution of the 370 men and 370 women according to nationality is given.

A German Mother and Her Youngest

Two other children have been sent to the country by a Fresh Air agency

"Irish-American" and "German-American" are used in the table to designate native-born persons of Irish and German parentage. This means, of course, an American generation. Thus, about 43 per cent of the 740 persons may be classed as Americans. The Irish and German, who together made up about 34 per cent, were for the most part residents of several years' standing. About three-fourths of the group were Americans or fairly well Americanized.

In the particular families representing a German and Irish union there was no tendency, even in an atmosphere full of reproach and recrimination, to blame the faults of either party upon his or her nationality. A German mother-in-law, for instance, was complaining that her son had married a poor housekeeper, an Irish girl from a neighboring tenement. When she was asked whether she thought this might be due to her Irish habits, the old woman took up the cudgels at once in behalf of the Irish, declaring that they were just as good housekeepers as her own countrywomen. Another German mother whose daughter had married an Irish longshoreman who was turning out badly, was never once heard, in all her bitter denunciation of the young husband, to attribute his faults to his race.

There was only one marriage of the entire 370 in which the woman's employment could be directly traced to conflicting racial traditions of the husband and wife. This was the case where an Armenian had married the American-born daughter of German parents. The husband objected to his wife's going on the street alone, saying that in his country "a respectable woman didn't do such things." His wife replied that he was in America, "where things are different."

When her husband continued to object, she went out one day and got a job at her old trade, manicuring. This episode had a happy ending, for when the Armenian saw his wife " holding other men's hands " he surrendered completely. After this, the American wife lived at home, but she walked out alone whenever she liked.

To review then, briefly, the conditions within the families of our 370 mothers:

The largest group of families was that in which the fathers were living at home and were at work. The next largest was the group of widows' families. Of the latter, more than one-third had been deprived of the breadwinner by tuberculosis—the disease which, most of all, exhausts the economic resources of the survivors. Of the living husbands, more than 70 per cent were under forty-five and should still have been earning. An examination of their occupations, however, showed that they were engaged in low-paid work * and that more than half of them were in occupations where unemployment is characteristic. Less than half the families had children who had begun to work, and a large proportion of these, 28 per cent, were still under sixteen. As to nationality, the families were principally Americans, Americanized or German and Irish, with homogeneous social ideals. All these circumstances emphasize the fact that the primary reason why the women worked was not moral or racial, but economic. They were the wives and widows of under-employed and under-paid men and were compelled to contribute to the family whatever earning value their labor possessed.

* As shown in Table 26, page 128, the earnings of the fathers averaged less than $500 per year.

CHAPTER III

OCCUPATIONS OF THE MOTHERS

THE work of these women is largely drudgery. It belongs to the class of servile rather than specialized labor. They have no skill to market; they have only their untrained physical powers to sell.

The appearance of charwomen on their knees scrubbing an office floor, a public corridor, or the lobby of a theater is not one which inspires respect in the ordinary passerby. The work of public cleaning bears, in addition to the ancient stigma attached to menial work, the ignominy of being done in public places. The dishevelled working clothes and the humble posture of the scrubbers seem to deprive them of any measure of human dignity. Some employers are inclined to feel that the kindest attitude toward these workers is to neglect and ignore them. The superintendent of a world-famous building stated that he had had the employes of every department photographed at their work. But he was too considerate, he maintained, to photograph the scrubwomen "on the job," because their work was too "menial." The irony of such considerateness is apparent when one remembers that their work was done in public corridors almost as exposed as a city thoroughfare. They are one of the most familiar sights of the business district.

But familiar as they are, the dingy toilers do not

readily strike the attention. One may pass them again and again without stopping to think that a human life, more or less complete, is imprisoned within each of these humble figures. Least of all does one suspect what a life of heroic effort it may be, or how many of the workers, single-handed, are daily fighting a battle that takes more courage than Waterloo.

A lesser group of the women were working in West Side factories. Here the daily hours are longer, but the work is nearer home than the office cleaning jobs. The laundry on the block or the candy factory in the next street,—almost automatically the women apply at these places for work. They may know conditions in the neighboring factory to be especially hard and conditions in a more distant factory to be more endurable, yet they will prefer the job in the nearer place.

The windows of Mrs. Ray's flat faced the rear of the Diamond Laundry. The " Diamond " was wellknown for its offenses in overtime. Mrs. Ray could see the women at work there evening after evening and noticed the hour when they went home. In November she remarked, " Them poor souls haven't gone home a night this week till 9 o'clock." But later when her husband lost his job as driver, she went straight to the " Diamond" to get work. For, notwithstanding the long hours, the laundry windows overlooked her own apartment and its front door was one short block from her own.

The actual number of women in each of the four occupational groups is to be seen in Table 13, which follows.

Seventy per cent of the women were employed in some form of domestic and personal service, and 23

TABLE 13.—PRESENT OCCUPATIONS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	Mothers
Professional service:	
Professional show woman	2
Total	2
Domestic and personal service:	
Day worker	90
Public cleaner in office building	31
theater	29
store	9
factory	4
hospital	3
church	2
railway car	2
school	2
All public cleaners	82
Janitress	49
Hotel worker	12
Laundress (at home)	11
Waitress	5
Housekeeper	2
Cook	2
Foster-mother	2
Bartender	2
Sick nurse	1
Midwife	1
Total	259
Trade and transportation:	
Newsdealer and fruit dealer	8
Saleswoman	7
Storekeeper	3
Trade and transportation (continued):	
Cashier	1
Clerk	1
Stenographer	1
Telephone operator	1
Theater usher	1
Total	23
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:	
Laundry worker [a]	33
Garment worker	12
Seamstress	10
Candy factory operative	5
Silk goods worker	4
Lace maker	3
Bead worker	2
Bookbinder	2
Carpet worker	2
Milliner	2
Paper-box maker	2
Piano worker	2
Cigarette maker	1
Cracker factory operative	1
Pearl-button maker	1
Playing-card factory operative	1
Straw sewer	1
Tin-can maker	1
Wig maker	1
Total	86
Grand total	370

[a] See footnote to Table 9, p. 48.

per cent, or a little less than a fourth, were factory operatives. A small and unimportant group, 6.2 per cent of the entire number, belonged to the occupations classed under trade and transportation. Two women only, or a half of 1 per cent, are assigned by the list to professional service—both of them being chorus girls in the Hippodrome.

The occupations followed fall roughly into two important groups, with almost three-fourths of the women engaged in domestic and personal labor outside the home, and about one-fourth working in factories.

COMPARISON OF MOTHERS' AND DAUGHTERS' EMPLOYMENT

A comparison between the work of these women and the work of their daughters points to the changing nature of women's work. Referring back to Chapter II we find the occupations followed by the working daughters of our working mothers. The contrast between the work of the two generations is to be seen in Table 14.

According to the percentages, the daughters are not as yet following in their mothers' footsteps. The table shows 70 per cent of the mothers as against 5 per cent of the daughters to be engaged in domestic service. The girls have been drafted off into the newer occupations; stores, shops, and factories have claimed 93 per cent of them. The West Side furnishes very few young recruits to the ranks of domestic and personal service.

But a question arises regarding the future work of these daughters of labor. To what extent will they shift into domestic work outside the home at a later

period of their lives? Many of them, after they shall have passed through a period of child-bearing and home-making, will be compelled again to become wage-earners. Will the domestic experience they may have acquired in the meantime in their own homes influence them to look for domestic jobs when they renew their wage-earning? Or will they turn back to the old job

TABLE 14.—OCCUPATIONS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONS OF 111 DAUGHTERS

Occupation	MOTHERS		DAUGHTERS	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional service . .	2	.5	2	1.8
Domestic and personal service	259	70.0	6	5.4
Trade and transportation .	23	6.2	46	41.4
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits . . .	86	23.3	57	51.4
Total	370	100.0	111	100.0

and the old wage? Most of them will probably do the latter. Their first thought will be to get back into the old industrial grooves, to take the old familiar road to money wages.

Let us examine for a moment the industrial careers of their mothers. Have they inclined to return to their abandoned occupations, or to take up new ones when wage-earning became necessary a second time in their lives?

The occupations of the women before marriage and at present are compared in Table 15.

By occupation before marriage was meant the last one followed prior to, or overlapping that event. The make-up of old occupations deserves more detailed description. Agriculture included three women who had been field hands in Hungary and one who had been

TABLE 15.—PRESENT OCCUPATIONS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH THEIR OCCUPATIONS BEFORE MARRIAGE

Occupation	MOTHERS OCCUPIED AS SPECIFIED			
	At present		Before marriage	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Agriculture	..	....	4	1.1
Professional service	2	.5	3	.8
Domestic and personal service	259	70.0	166	45.9
Trade and transportation	23	6.2	19	5.2
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	86	23.3	114	31.5
No occupation	..	....	56	15.5
Total	370	100.0	362[a]	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to the occupations before marriage of eight of the 370 mothers.

a vineyard worker in Italy. Professional service included two chorus girls and one teacher. Domestic and personal service included 144 girls who had lived out, 15 hotel servants, five waitresses in restaurants, and two manicurists. Trade and transportation included 12 sales girls, four cashiers, two stenographers, and one telephone operator. Manufacturing and mechanical

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A Laundry Where Many Married Women Work

pursuits included 92 factory operatives and 22 seamstresses. Of the entire group of women for whom information was available, 56, or 16 per cent, had not worked out, but had lived at home.

From the foregoing table it appears that most of the women did housework before marriage, 46 per cent of them for wages and 16 per cent without wages in their own homes. After the 62 per cent in housework, the next largest group was 32 per cent in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Only 5 per cent were in trade and transportation. Then, as now, the women were divided chiefly between domestic occupations and factory work. They have not shifted their occupations to any great extent, but have engaged in work similar to that in which they were formerly employed.

It must be noted that most of the old domestic jobs meant living out as housemaids, cooks, and nurses. At present domestic labor means working out by the day in private houses or by the week in public buildings. The essential difference is that the latter form releases the women to their own home circles at nightfall. At the same time with the rapid decline in the supply of servants there has come an increase in the demand for the day's worker, the intermittent servant.*

Turning now to manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, we find that they once engaged 32 per cent of the girls and now engage about 23 per cent of the women. The falling off in the percentage of factory workers among the middle aged is probably due more to the

*The building of apartments in which no sleeping rooms are provided for servants has probably helped to augment the demand.

departure of the textile mills from the district and the resulting decline of factory jobs for women than to a voluntary shifting of occupation.

The twine factories previously mentioned had played so important a part in the industrial lives of West Side women that they deserve especial mention. Many of our 370 wage-earning mothers had worked there for longer or shorter periods. Some of them had gone to work as little girls, nine or eleven years old, and had been employed as errand girls and needle-winders. Those who were ambitious learned to operate the ball-winding machines and to weave hammocks. In one of them the spinning was largely done by Polish and Italian girls in rooms on the lower floors. These foreign spinners at work in their dirty, lint-filled rooms, with their heads tied up in cloths, were greatly scorned by the American twine workers who did the cleaner work and occupied the better lighted rooms upstairs.

This factory seems to have maintained a sort of patriarchal attitude which no doubt did a great deal toward making the girls content with their jobs. In pleasant weather they ate their lunches on the roof overlooking the North River. On the top floor there also existed what might be called an old-fashioned welfare department. It was carried on by an old married couple by the name of Garth who lived there as caretakers. The Garths were English twine makers who had started, in a little shed, the original business from which the subsequent owners had developed the large factory. Simply because it was the natural thing for her to do under the circumstances, Mrs. Garth "mothered" the girls a good deal, giving them her simple remedies for head-

aches and colds, and providing merely by her presence a healthy influence over the younger spirits.

The women who had worked there always spoke of the departure of this factory as a great loss to the neighborhood. There were dramatic descriptions of the Monday morning when they went to work as usual and found a notice on the door saying that the works had shut down. What the factory had meant for many West Side families can best be illustrated by the history of the Meaghers.

Mrs. Meagher was a small, wiry woman with a dark, intense face. Her parents were Germans, but Mrs. Meagher had been determined from childhood to be only American. She was sent to a German school, but she ran away, and when her truancy was discovered she declared that she would not go to a school where they spoke German.

Her school career altogether was a very brief one. At the age of nine, she went to work in the twine factory. She began in the hammock-making room as a needle winder, working from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m. with an hour off at noon. She continued in that department, learning to sew and finish hammocks. When she married, she was earning about $12 a week, except during the slack summer months, which she filled in with whatever work she could find, always returning to her twine work in the fall.

Mr. Meagher, whom she left her job to marry, was ten years older than herself. He was of a jovial, boastful disposition, quite as willing to take things easy as his wife was inclined to take them hard. "I'm a thick Irishman, that's the kind of a man I am," was Mr. Meagher's favorite description of himself. "I'm going

to take my wife over to Ireland some day," he added on one occasion. "You mean to the Island, I guess," was Mrs. Meagher's scornful retort.

She had begun her married life with hopes of not working again in the factory. Her husband was employed in a roller mill and earning from $12 to $15 a week. But when her first baby was two years old, Meagher had an attack of diphtheria and rheumatism which lasted six weeks. Although he recovered completely from this illness, he was so completely demoralized by idleness and drink that he never settled down to a steady job again. He contented himself with doing a casual job now and then, gathering fuel for the kitchen stove, and occasionally minding the baby.

Mrs. Meagher returned to the twine factory during her husband's illness and continued working there until the factory closed. When her second baby was born she stayed at home for six months and then returned to work. The older girl, who was ten years old, took full charge of the little one, who learned to call her "mamma." Annie developed many habits like the older women of the tenements. For instance, to go out on the street, she would put a black shawl over her head without tidying herself in any way. It was not strange that at fourteen she was so far behind in her classes that she was not able to get her working papers. After the twine factory discontinued, Mrs. Meagher became an office cleaner. "But," she said, "I'd be working there today if it hadn't moved away."

How have the women bridged the space between their two wage-earning periods—the period before marriage and the present period? Especially, how many of the widows now working devoted themselves ex-

clusively to home making during the years of their marriage? How many of them have experienced that economic tragedy of widowhood, the handicapped return after years of idleness to a forgotten industrial world?

We commonly assume that a period of industrial quiescence has once existed for wage-earning widows. This is what Frau Elisabeth Gnauck-Kühne calls the "Spalte" or Split* in their industrial life. How complete or incomplete the division had been among the widows of our groups was a question to be answered by a study of their industrial histories.

It developed that many of them had been intermittent or constant wage-earners even when their husbands were living. The same conditions which are now sending the group of married women out to earn,—sickness, irregular employment, and idleness among the men,—once operated on the married life of those who are now widows.

Here are the figures for 125 widows: 52, or 42 per cent, had worked at intervals during their married life; 64, or 51 per cent, had never worked before the husband's death; and for nine widows, or 7 per cent, this information was not obtained.

A few of the widows' stories, taken from the note-

* "In general there follows the conclusion that the economic employment of women is not tranquil and unbroken, that rather it lacks continuance on the whole. It is episodic, for it is fundamentally influenced by marriage. A woman does not, like a man, enter upon an enduring, usually a life-long union with a chosen occupation. She, much more than he, has two irons in the fire; besides her gainful employment she has her home-making duties. Her life is dually divided. This is seen from the mere fact that the gainful occupations of youthful years are performed by the unmarried and of later years by widows, that is, by those who have not yet married and those no longer married." Gnauck-Kühne, Elisabeth: Die Deutsche Frau um die Jahrhundertwende, pp. 97–98. Berlin, Otto Liebmann, 1904.

books of the visitors, are given to show some typical sets of circumstances which drove them into wage-earning prior to widowhood.

Mrs. Maxwell's husband was a plumber. Sometimes he would get a job for two weeks and the family would get along nicely. Then again he would work one or two days in the week and the family would go without food. One Saturday night, when he handed his wife only $12, she decided that she herself must do something. She got a place as janitress and took in washing besides. Her husband was very irritable and made a great row if he came home and found her working or any work around in sight. But she did not know how to manage any other way, for there were times when he brought home nothing and the family might have starved without her assistance. "He was a hard man to live with," Mrs. Maxwell declared, "but I miss him."

Mrs. O'Niel worked as attendant in a "beauty doctor's" office before her marriage. Her wages were $10 a week. After her marriage she continued at her work for two years and then gave up working for awhile. During her husband's life she worked off and on, mainly taking in washing and ironing. After her husband's death, she got regular work as a waitress.

Mrs. Downing lived out as a child's nurse until she was married. After her marriage, which occurred when she was eighteen, she went out working by the day. She was earning most of the time during her married life except when the children were very small. At times when it was impossible for her to go out to work, she took in washing.

Before her marriage, Mrs. Schon worked with her father who was a tailor. He took in coats to press from a manufacturer. He pressed the collars and shoulders and his daughter pressed the sleeves. Together they earned about $13 a week. After her marriage, Mrs. Schon worked in

her husband's tailor shop, doing sewing as well as pressing. Together they earned about $25 a week. After her husband's death Mrs. Schon hired help and continued to run the shop.

Some of the occupations that were followed intermittently during married life were office cleaning, bookbinding, box making, carpet mending, braid finishing, silk winding, laundry work, wig making, and dressmaking. However, the most usual occupation was charring by the day, as the requirements of this work were such as could be met by women who could not keep the rigid hours required in factories and stores.

NATURE OF PRESENT OCCUPATIONS

To return to the present occupations: The occupations of each group composed of five or more members will be separately considered. These are, in the order of numbers engaged, day's work, public cleaning, janitress' work, laundry work, hotel work, garment making, laundering (at home), seamstress' work, petty merchandizing, sales work, candy making and packing, and waitress' work.

Day's Work. The work of the 90 women who go out by the day is hard to define. It consists of any or all of the numerous chores which are included under the generic name of "housework"—washing and ironing, window cleaning, brass and silver polishing, floor scrubbing, and perhaps cooking. It is much the same labor that a woman does in her own home, except that as the servant of the middle-class mistress in an apartment house she usually finds better conditions of work than in her own home in the tenement. Her employer's house has running hot water, set tubs, and perhaps

even an electric washing machine. At home she must heat the water in a vessel and lift it on and off the stove. When we compare the lack of conveniences in the tenement house with the "modern improvements" of the apartment house, it is easy to understand why some of the women declared that working out wasn't so hard as working at home.

Public Cleaning. The great office buildings, the churches, clubs, hospitals, theaters, and schools supply numerous cleaning jobs for unskilled women workers. One office building, for instance, is 50 stories high and has 25 acres of floor space to be scrubbed. There are 145 women employed to do the scrubbing. In the evening, between seven and eight, you may see them leaving the building—a little army of shabby, middle-aged women, many of them in dusty widow's black, and carrying under their arms in brown paper parcels their working skirts and shoes.

In scrubbing floors the women creep about on their knees, with brushes and pails of suds, in the most laborious and time-wasting fashion. They spend hours daily in this cramped position. In some places they are either on their knees or stooping the entire day. They kneel on a mat or wear knee pads to prevent housemaid's knee. But even this slight aid is not always available. Their knees grow blistered and callous. Mrs. McCarthy, whose duty it was to scrub down the stairs of the "white staircase" every day, would sometimes "go home and cry because her knees hurted her so." She had no kind of a lotion in the house but vaseline, so she applied that. "But it was the worst thing I could do. It made them soft, and

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Office Cleaners on Their Way Home at 9:15 a.m.

you want them hard, you know." After a friend had helped her to make a pair of well-fitting knee pads, she went about her work more comfortably.

The women suffer excessively from "cricks" in the back and neck, due to the long-continued strain of stooping and kneeling. But they are not allowed to use long-handled mops. The reason usually given is that it is not possible to clean so thoroughly with mops. However, it was observed in a certain hospital where most of the floors are done by women on their knees, that a few rooms, including the floor of the antiseptic operating room, were considered sufficiently clean after a porter had gone over them carefully with a long-handled mop.

The scrubbing is done in the most primitive fashion, and as long as the women's labor is as cheap as it is, there is little incentive for employers to adopt improved methods of work. There is also a general belief that women do this sort of work more thoroughly than men, —a fact which has served to prolong their tenure. Moreover, the scrubbing machines which have been tried so far have not been satisfactory. The superintendent of one building experimented with one in the large ground floor thoroughfare, but gave it up and returned to primitive hand-and-knee scrubbers. It was difficult to get the superintendent to speak calmly of this scrubbing machine, or to refer to the experiment at all further than to declare he would never repeat it. However, he consented to make the following charges against it: "It took three men to run it—one to operate it, one to carry water, and one to wipe up after it. It didn't clean the floors and it didn't *touch* the corners."

The machine and the three men were banished, and

instead six women were set to scrubbing the pavement with brushes, powdered pumice, and water. These women work evenings from 7 o'clock until midnight. They will continue to hold their jobs as long as they clean the floors better than the machine and as long as the six of them can be hired for no more than the cost of three men.

Most of the theaters have installed vacuum cleaners operated by male porters. But, as yet, they are not seriously depended on, and their daily use is said to wear out the carpets. At the most, they remove a part of the dust, so that the women who follow them do not raise such clouds as otherwise. The charwomen instinctively recognize in the vacuum cleaner a natural enemy, and none of them can be induced to say a word in its praise. They realize that as hand cleaning in public buildings is replaced by machine cleaning their jobs will disappear.

A great opera house gives work to 20 women. The entire house—orchestra, balconies, and galleries—is carpeted with red plush, which is swept down daily, including Sunday, with whisk brooms! Beginning at the top and working downward through the sections, the women go along between the rows of chairs on their knees and brush the dirt and paper into dustpans. This laborious process occupies them for at least half the working day and they are constantly breathing dust during its performance.

A serious feature of public cleaning is the thirst caused by breathing in dust. In one well-conducted theater, the 18 scrubwomen had a cup of tea together at 10 o'clock in the morning. The manager was alive to the fact that sweeping is a dusty and fatiguing occu-

pation, causing excessive thirst and creating one of the primary conditions for the beer-drinking habit. One woman in another theater related that she drank five cups of coffee at intervals during the day; another declared that chewing gum incessantly had "saved her from the drink habit."

Moreover, the psychological effect of constantly dealing with dirt is unwholesome. The women feel that constant association with dust and sweepings is degrading.* It disintegrates their personal standards and self-respect. By contrast with scrubbing dirt from floors, coal shoveling seems a clean occupation. One theater charwoman said bitterly, "The 'scrubs' dassent even be around where the actresses are."

The dangers to health from constantly breathing the germ-laden dust of great assemblage places need scarcely be mentioned. The public cleaning woman is the first and chief victim of the disgusting habit of spitting. Decent women were compelled to scrub floors unspeakably defiled by spitting, a condition as dangerous as it was revolting. One woman was said to have acquired tuberculosis in her finger from scrubbing the floor of an orchestra. It is true that not all cleaning jobs were equally bad, but the worst involved hardships which were an offense against humanity and bore no relation to the numbers of women engaged.

It would be well if some wet vacuum process could be devised, or a method of squeegeeing with water containing carbolic or a similar disinfectant which would

* Mr. E. Bevan, in an article on Dirt in the *Contemporary Review*, February, 1911, points out that the relation between the moral sense and the sense of uncleanness is not only one of analogy, as we have been accustomed to consider it, but that the connection is much more intimate.

not be injurious to the cleaners. In any case, whether such floors are cleaned by hand process or machine, disinfectants should if possible be applied in the early stages.

But the ability to make the best of conditions which cannot be remedied belongs to these women as well as to others more fortunate than they. Hear Mrs. Clinton, as she walks to the theater at 5 o'clock on a snowy winter afternoon. "I think I'm going to be able to keep this job," she says, "because six women have tried it before me and all of them gave it up. But I'm a steady worker, and that's what people want in New York. I tell that to my son-in-law to encourage him. He's just come from Toronto with his wife and baby so we could all be together. He's only getting $8.00 a week in the piano factory where he works, and he's beginning to get restless. But I tell him to stick to it. 'Norman,' I said, 'you'll have a chance in New York to show what is in you.'"

Janitress' Work. The duties of the janitress in the tenement are to clean down the stairways and halls, oversee the removal of ashes and garbage, to collect rents, and remain on the premises always when there is an empty apartment in order to show it to prospective tenants. In return they hold in temporary usufruct an apartment in the house. It is granted the janitress either rent free or for a sum less than the usual amount paid for it. If the house is one of the meaner tenements, consisting of two and three-room apartments, her quarters are just as good as those of any of the other tenants. If the apartments are larger, she either puts up with mean, dark rooms on the ground floor or pays some rent besides giving janitress' serv-

ice. In the next higher grade of apartment house, she must live in the basement; from a person in authority, as she was in the tenement, she has become a menial. The consequence is that the women often prefer a janitress' place in a shabby tenement to that of a caretaker in a better house, and these positions in the neighborhood are at a premium. There is usually one janitress to a house with 20 families, although sometimes she takes charge of two or three houses.

Occasionally a janitress will develop very fair business capacity for her work. A large real estate dealer in the district says that he depends on the character of his janitresses to keep his apartments rented. "A good janitress will keep your house full," he said, "and a poor one will soon have it empty." Some of the women hold their places for years. A housekeeper in Fiftieth Street had had charge of her house for nineteen years. On the other hand, if she collects the rents satisfactorily, she may be careless in the performance of every other duty. There are no especial standards of cleanliness and order, and in this respect janitress' service in the district is poor.

Laundry Work. Laundry work engaged the largest single group of those in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. The processes represented were folding and feeding on the mangle (14 women), shaking (six women), hand ironing (four women), flannel washing (three women), starching (two women), forewoman's work (two women), collar machine operating (one woman), and marking and sorting (one woman). All of these processes except the last require constant standing.

The work on the mangle is comparatively light and

unskilled. It is done by the younger women and involves less strain on the muscles than other laundry processes. The causes of fatigue lie in the monotonous motions of feeding and folding and in the excessive heat and moisture of the workrooms.

The work of the shakers is extremely laborious. Shaking out wet sheets and towels, or barbers' coats and aprons, means not only heavy lifting, but constant bending, stooping, and reaching. Like the jobs at the mangle, shaking is unskilled, but it is far more arduous in character. It is the most poorly paid work in the laundry. The middle-aged women who are forced to go out and earn money are most likely to be given this work. Mrs. Harrison, for instance, at the age of thirty-seven, was glad to shake out sheets in the laundry next door to her home for $4.50 a week. The Charity Organization Society arranged to give her three weeks' training as an ironer so that she might be able to do the more skilled and better paid work. But Mrs. Harrison, after two weeks' trial, decided that she was "too old to learn," and fell back on shaking at her old wage. This is too often the frame of mind of middle-aged women who, after years of unskilled housekeeping in the tenements, are forced again into the thick of industry. They decide that they are "too old to learn" or "haven't the patience" to acquire skill in any line.

Conditions in the laundry trade have recently been made the subject of thorough investigations.* The

* In 1910 the Consumers' League of New York City made an investigation of conditions in steam laundries, the results of which are given in a book entitled Making Both Ends Meet, by Sue A. Clark and Edith Wyatt. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1911.

In 1911 the Federal Department of Labor published, in Volume XII of Condition of Woman and Child Wage-earners in the United States, a report on the Employment of Women in Laundries.

West Side laundries, in particular—14 in number—are described in a recent report of the state factory commission. According to this report, "Machine washing and ironing, as it is carried on in the motor laundries visited, retains all the worst features of domestic drudgery and adds the further evils of long hours, speeding, and dangerously unhealthful conditions." *

Regarding one of the largest laundries on the West Side, the same report says: "In one laundry, so-called 'scientific management' is maintained throughout the departments. The following is an example of problems which have been worked out by experts in the office. 'If 10 women shake 6,925 towels in five hours, how many towels can one woman shake in one hour?' In this way an average of capacity is obtained and standards are set for different processes. The workers are probably unconscious of how it is done, but they feel that some power is speeding them ahead. There is no evidence that the experts are studying the fatigue of the workers and apportioning rest periods so as to prevent over-exertion."

Let us, for a moment, follow one of these women home after she has been shaking towels at the rate of two a minute all day.

Mrs. Kadowski is a comely Polish woman with black hair and eyes. On her face are many tired lines though she is not an old woman by any means. She is not particularly clean or neat in her dress. That is not strange, as she has just returned from her long day in the laundry. She has no sooner crossed her own threshold than she rolls up her sleeves and begins her family washing. A little must be done every

* Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 345.

night for they have few clothes and the baby necessarily soils a great many. Nor can she do this work uninterruptedly, for the baby clings to her skirts begging to be held and the mother drops everything to take him up. He is healthy and red-cheeked, but his little face and dress are very dirty.

Like the office cleaners, the laundry workers remain for years with the same establishment. For instance, Mrs. Myers has for three years done all the ironing "from overalls to the finest shirtwaists" in the same laundry. The place has changed hands three times. But each new owner takes over Mrs. Myers as the "bargain" that goes with the purchase.

Another woman had worked five years in one laundry before she finally left exhausted by overtime. For two months before Christmas she worked every evening till 9 or 9:30. It was at the end of this period that she gave up her job. After resting three weeks, she got work in another laundry nearby.

A young wife of eighteen had been working steadily in one position for four years. She did not stop work after her marriage, not even on the day of her confinement. She got as far as to dress to go to work the very morning her child was born. After three weeks' rest, she was back at the mangle.

Another laundry worker's period of service in the same laundry ran as follows: From the age of thirteen till the age of twenty-seven she worked at the shirt laundry. She married at twenty-seven and lived at home for the next seven years, returning to the laundry only for short periods during this time to "help out" in emergencies. She then went back to the laundry and worked there five years regularly, up to three months

An Irish Mother at Her Job in the Laundry

before her death from tuberculosis. She had worked altogether nineteen years in the same place.

The women were always proud of these stable work records, viewing them as evidence of their faithfulness and industry. The fact that they had not been able to work themselves up into a better grade of labor and better remuneration was never regretted. It was invariably presented as evidence of "ambition" if a woman had stuck to her work, however low grade or ill paid it might be.

Hotel Work. Hotel work was represented by four scrubwomen, six pantry women, and two chambermaids. The scrubwomen work on their hands and knees all day. For scouring they use washing powders, sapolio, and bits of soap left in the guest rooms. Stairs, bath rooms, floors, and all white paint must be thoroughly cleaned.

The work of the pantry women is to prepare the portions of salad, sandwiches, cheese, fruit, and coffee to go out to the table after the order has been given. The pantry is often an inside room with artificial light. The long hours spent in this atmosphere cannot fail to be injurious. The following account of a visit paid to a pantry woman is significant of the conditions of this work.

Found Mrs. Burt at home sick in bed. She had worked in the pantry of the Avery Hotel three years. Left there because she was getting so thin and thought she had better work in a place where she could be in an outside room. Secured such a place and stayed till she was taken sick four weeks ago. Says she does not expect to have trouble finding a place when she gets about again, as store-room work is easy to get. People are continually changing positions in this work.

The work of the chambermaids is to attend to the bedrooms. They take care of from 20 to 40 bedrooms a day in the large hotels. The conditions of this sort of work are such as peculiarly to expose the women who do it to immoral influences. It is, of course, a mere coincidence that the two mothers of illegitimate children appearing in the table at the beginning of Chapter II are identical with the two chambermaids mentioned in this section. The fact is significant, however, and illustrates the necessity for the legal restriction of night work, and the exposed conditions of hotel service.

Garment Making. The garment trade, with its numerous and complex subdivisions of processes, was represented by two theatrical costume makers, one buttonhole maker, one cutter in a department store, one fitter, one children's dressmaker, one tailor's helper, two shirtwaist pressers, and three outworkers doing embroidering at home. This class of work included the most highly skilled and experienced occupations of the entire group.

Laundering at Home. The laundresses who were at work in their homes were superior workers who were doing high class laundering. Its attractiveness for the women who have sufficient skill to do it is that it pays well. A German woman who had tried successively various kinds of outwork from factories—flower making, button sewing, embroidery, bead making—finally gave them all up and took in washing. "Washing and ironing is the only kind of home work that pays," she declared as the result of her experience.

Seamstress' Work. Sewing by the day is similar to day's work in its irregularity and uncertain returns.

The kind of sewing done by the 10 women who followed this occupation was of the plainest and simplest kind. Some of it was obtained through the social and charitable agencies of the neighborhood and was done at home. It required almost no skill and was correspondingly low paid.

Petty Merchandizing. Many of the small news stands in the city are kept by widows. It is also customary for wives to share the work where the husband is a newsdealer. The division of work between them is usually that the husband "makes the route," as they call the delivery of the papers, and the wife "minds the stand." The children take their turn after school hours. The mothers who were interviewed were on duty four to eight hours a day. The women declare that it takes an entire family to run a news stand.

The newsdealers of the district are mostly Russian Jewish families. There is a newsdealers' union, to which the four newsdealers interviewed belonged. These were the only women workers of the entire group who had union affiliations of any kind. The four women helping at fruit stands were Italian mothers. This business, like the news stand, occupies the whole family. The mothers were working regularly a half day or whole day.

Sales Work. The conditions of work of the seven saleswomen varied greatly, according to whether they were full-time or half-time employes in the department stores, and according to whether they worked in the large department stores or the small neighborhood shops. The chief variation is in hours of work, but there is also considerable difference in the degree of

specialization in knowledge of "stock" and in the amount of comfort provided by store construction. Several of this group were experienced saleswomen.

Mrs. Spahr's story, closely interwoven with West Side conditions as it is, deserves to be told. Her parents were Germans. Her father was a cigar maker, and while he sat at home working, his wife went out to sell the product. It was found advisable for his wife to go out instead of himself, because she didn't "have to leave so much money in the saloon." After her marriage, Mrs. Spahr helped her husband in his grocery store while her mother kept the house. But after the loss of first her husband and then her mother, she was no longer able to run the store single-handed. When she finally gave up the business, she was in debt. She now applied for a position as saleswoman in the grocery division of a large department store, and was given a position at $7.00 a week.

Candy Making and Packing. The work of the candy packers is thus described in the report of the State Factory Commission of 1912.* "Packing candy . . . usually requires constant standing or moving about. In packing the higher grades of candy, each girl has a long table on which are spread out several rows of empty boxes, with one filled box at the end to serve as a model. She then takes a handful of candies from a large box, containing only one kind, and moves along the line, putting one in the same relative place in each box. The same thing is repeated with each kind that goes in, till the box is filled. The 'spread' is then completed, the boxes are closed and carried to the wrapping table, and a new spread of empty boxes is arranged on the packing table."

* Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 348.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
LIBRARY

Candy Packers at Work

The chocolate room is thus described in the same report. "The chocolate rooms are generally cooled by refrigerating pipes, and their temperature is sometimes as low as 60 degrees. This is unnecessarily cold; from 65 degrees to 68 degrees is said by experts in the trade to be perfectly satisfactory. The lower temperature may seem comfortable for a short time, but it is found to be chilling when the worker sits from ten to twelve hours without exercise. Many of the girls complain of this hardship. They wear shawls or sweaters. When they rest their feet on asphalt floors they feel the cold particularly." *

This is what Mrs. Perella, an Italian woman working in such a chocolate room, says of it. "I like better to work there than where so much machinery is to make a noise. But it is so cold. I must put nuts on the candy dripping with hot chocolate. The room must be so cold that after the nuts is on, the boiling hot chocolate will freeze and be ready to pack in five minutes. I wear two pairs of stockings and thick shoes, but my feet nearly freeze.

"I have four children at home. The oldest is twelve years. My husband hurt his foot two months ago. But now he looks for work again. He gets up at 3 o'clock in the morning to get the paper and the advertisements. I think he will find a place as porter."

Waitress' Work. In the restaurant of a department store, the women usually have charge of two tables, each seating four persons, or two "four-seaters," as they say. They are not supposed to remove soiled dishes; but frequently during rush hours the dishes

* Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, pp. 347–348.

pile up on the tables faster than the tray boys can remove them. The waitress must then lend a hand or the service may be clogged. However, the chief strain in this occupation comes from constant standing and walking.

In the department stores and tea rooms it is customary for the girls to use trays. But in the largest system of restaurants in the city, where the work is all done by women, "arm work" has been introduced. In these restaurants the women show themselves quite as skilful as men in carrying dishes without the help of a tray.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Looking for work is one of the commonest experiences among dwellers on the West Side. Men and women, old and young, boys and girls,—they all know what it means to be hunting for a job. For youthful and adult wage-earners it is much the same blundering, haphazard procedure. Time and energy and courage are consumed in walking about from place to place, following up vague clues and ill-founded hopes.

Such wandering has for the boy or girl the spice of adventure. Fathers and brothers often refuse to take anything but work at their own trade or occupation and thus preserve a remnant of independence. It is only after the chastening of prolonged unemployment that they are "willing to take just anything." But the mother who must earn finds it no adventure to look for work and usually she is willing to "take anything" from the start. Her common phrase is that she is "looking for something." The only definite item in her mind is the $5.00 or $6.00 that she will be able to bring home at the end of the week.

A more helpless figure than the middle-aged mother of a family starting out to look for work would be hard to imagine. Sometimes she buys a newspaper and reads the advertisements. This is called "following the papers." Hotel positions are often secured in this way. Through the women's exchanges, neighborhood churches, settlements, day nurseries, and charitable agencies, she can find opportunities to go out and work by the day. Having one satisfied patron, she is usually able to secure another through the recommendation of the first. There is perhaps more organized effort to place the work of women who go out by the day than any other class of labor done by middle-aged women of the West Side.

But the women who do day's work derive at best a varying and uncertain income. They complain that "you never know what you'll have on a Saturday night." Those who must have "something regular" look for a factory job or an office cleaner's place. Like their sixteen-year-old daughters, their usual plan is simply to "apply on the premises." They walk about for hours, following up poor chances and, worst of all, wearing out their shoes.

With the women, as with the men, it is often the "pushing sort" that gets the job rather than the industrious steady worker. Mrs. Rudden, who hadn't a "lazy bone in her body," as all her acquaintances could testify, had nevertheless a shy, apologetic air which was a distinct disadvantage in looking for work. Applying at one laundry after the other, she was always among those who were turned away. On the other hand, young Mrs. Snyder with her hustling manner and her engaging smile used to declare that "she could always

get taken on, even if there was 20 turned away." She explained her success by declaring that she was "ambitious." Her invalid husband, who had himself been "ambitious" before tuberculosis laid him low, would say to her, "Pop's kid, the reason you always get work is because you're *lookin'* for work. The others *ain't.*"

Mrs. Snyder's husband was not altogether right about the 20 women who were turned away. Certainly Mrs. Rudden was looking for work. She had six children to be supported on her husband's wage of $12, with insurance to pay every week, with three or four pairs of shoes to be bought every month. She was giving her children coffee for breakfast against her own better judgment, because she could not buy milk for so many. On top of all this had come a slight misfortune and a debt of $30. No one was ever looking for work more sincerely than Mrs. Rudden.

With Mrs. Williamson the search became a desperate one as the months went by. At her husband's death she had been left with two children, a boy of three years and a girl of eleven months. Williamson had left no insurance, but there were considerable savings in the bank. He had been a "tight" man with his money on board the ship of which he was second officer. His bill at the bar for a three months' voyage would not be over 45 cents. Consequently his wife had funds on hand to tide the family over a year and a half during which, of course, the children were growing older and less helpless. But the end of the savings inevitably came.

Mrs. Williamson began to look for work at the beginning of summer. A few odd days' cleaning and a little sewing was all that she managed to pick up. When November came she was still looking for work. Her

story of how she finally got a job shows what a desperate frame of mind she was in by this time.

"There was a woman in the next house that worked at the hospital. One night she came by and said they wanted another regular cleaning woman. The next morning, as I walked up to the hospital, I kept saying to myself, if I didn't get that job I would go home and do away with my children. I don't know what might have happened if they hadn't put me to work that morning. But they gave me the job. I'm working there four months now."

The job which probably saved the lives of the Williamson children was scrubbing stairs and floors nine hours a day, six days in the week, and it pays the grateful woman who does it $6.50 a week.

Very often the news of a vacant place comes through a friend or neighbor, just as Mrs. Williamson's opportunity finally came. Those who have work act as scouts for those who have none. Thus it sometimes happens that several neighbors from the same or adjoining tenements work at the same office building, theater, or factory. A woman who has much opportunity to act as agent for her employer develops a good deal of judgment in selecting the right kind of person.

There was a Mrs. Tomlin who had worked for two years at the same theater with only one week's absence during that time. When the "boss" needed a new woman or extra help, he simply commissioned Mrs. Tomlin to bring a recruit up from the West Side. One day when the investigator happened to be calling on Mrs. Tomlin, a neighbor woman dropped in to advertise her need of a job. "I wouldn't recommend her," said Mrs. Tomlin after the woman had gone. "She

wouldn't be steady. Didn't you hear her say there was a place she would have gone to see about this morning, but she had company and couldn't go? I'd like to see company that would keep *me* from going to see about a job."

The women feel a strong mutual responsibility to help one another to find employment. It does not occur to them to seek any immediate reward for their services from either side. It is enough for them if they can thus "square themselves with the boss" and secure a friendly fellow worker.

One woman, an office cleaner, was exceptional in that she had been inducted into the art of exploitation by her employers. She worked for a commercial agency which contracted to clean offices and public buildings by the day. Mrs. Nieman was paid $1.50 a day on the condition that she would find other women to work for $1.25 a day. Her method was simply to pretend that she herself was getting only $1.25 a day. Apparently she had no scruples about deceiving other women as poor as herself and thus helping to lower the standard of wages. Nor did Mrs. Nieman's husband, once a building trade worker and now a casual teamster, see anything morally awry in his wife's proceedings as middle woman. Had he not often enough had to "pay for his job"? It seemed to him only natural that the scrubwomen should pay for theirs.

There is no free municipal or state employment agency at which these women may apply, as they might if they were, for instance, in the state of Massachusetts or Wisconsin. The National Employment Exchange of New York, maintained by public spirited citizens, is an agency which aims to bring together the job and the

man, with the least possible waste and expense to both sides. But the field of the exchange is limited to manual labor for men, and office work for men and women. It does not handle the manual work of women. In the meantime, the women of the tenements roughly cooperate to help each other in work. Massed together as they are, the news of a vacant job is quickly passed around. The employer needs only to send word to the tenement quarters and he promptly has applicants at his door. Over half of the West Side women, when asked how they had secured their position, replied that they had got it "through a friend."

It is true that the local churches, settlements, and charity organization offices handle manual labor, especially domestic labor, almost exclusively, and give their services free. But it is apparent that all these methods are haphazard for the worker and unselective for the employer. In the meantime, many women who have only unskilled work to offer must earn in order to keep a home for their children. Their necessity renders them liable to exploitation by irresponsible contractors.

CHAPTER IV

HOURS OF WORK

WHEN we speak of the hours of work of laboring people, we presuppose some hours of leisure. The workingman has an hour at the end of the day when he stretches his legs by the kitchen stove and lights his pipe. Or, instead, he turns into the corner saloon for the miraculous draught which pours the sense of freedom through his veins and wipes out the memory of heavy toil.

Go down on the far West Side on a cold winter night, station yourself in a sheltered corner, and watch the laboring man as he comes from work and turns into the corner saloon. See him push open the glass door and, still carrying his spade, perhaps, pass from Eleventh Avenue straight into Elysium. Seen at such close range, the overpowering lure of the saloon for its victims is easy to realize. It is also easy to see then why the problem of the workingman's leisure time, brief as it may be, is one of such terrible importance.

But the wife of the workingman who goes out daily to earn has not even this brief hour of freedom. To speak of her "hours of work" is misleading. There is no hour of her day but has its duty, no day of her week but has its labors. The common saying that "a man works from sun to sun, a woman's work is never done" is peculiarly true of her. Often she has to work much harder at home than she does during the hours for

which she is paid. As one woman said, "I don't mind the work at Mrs. Van Hoozer's. Her family is small, and things are convenient in the laundry. It's the washing here at home for him and the boys that breaks my back. Here I ain't even got a wringer." However, for the present we shall limit our attention to the hours of work for which the women are paid, leaving the amount and time of their unremunerated labors to be described in a later chapter.

Among this comparatively small group of women almost every variety and arrangement of working hours known in industry was found. Only a minor group of them, the 23 per cent employed in factories, were in occupations in which the state regulates the hours of labor. The result is that many of them, in occupations ignored by the statutory provisions, worked hours that were excessively long, while for others the working time was unnecessarily interrupted and broken up and irregularly distributed. Already demoralized by their desultory habits of housekeeping, many of them had entered occupations in which the irregularity of hours offered the weakest of discipline.

So poorly were the West Side women trained in punctuality that one of the most difficult features of wage-earning for many of them was the necessity of being on time for their work. Several employers complained of their coming late in the morning, and one long-suffering boss spoke bitterly of the way they "cut under" in the afternoons. "You can just tell Mrs. Flynn," he said, sharply, "if she don't do better, something might happen." As a matter of fact, the irregularity of the women was partly the result of the boss's unsteady requirements.

Somewhere in the foreground of each of these homes, on the mantel or the bureau, stood a small round alarm clock, the kind that costs $1.00, or one day's earnings. In times of distress, this small piece of property is the last article to be pawned. The wife's wedding ring will be pawned first. A destitute woman came to the charity organization office and begged that first of all, though she was without food in the house, her alarm clock be redeemed from the pawn shop.

But even the assistance of this steady reminder is not sufficient to make punctuality an easy task. There was Mrs. Roth, for instance, who had worked four years in a building with a time clock. The burden of her heavy work in the building weighed as nothing in her recollections compared with the strain of "ringing in time" twice a day. What made it so difficult for her, as for most of the women, was not alone her lack of systematic habits but the conditions at home. She was always busied up to the last minute at washing, cooking, or cleaning. Her husband, on the other hand, could set off to work with a liberal margin of time and arrive on the spot in time to smoke a pipe before he began.

There proved to be great variability in the length of the working day among those employed regularly by the week. The exact daily and weekly schedule of hours was secured from 159 women working by the week. This group was made up of 94 women engaged in domestic and personal service, nine women in trade and transportation, and 56 in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.

Assuming as the normal working day the eight-hour standard set by the government of the United States

for its employes, those who worked eight hours or more are called full-time workers and those who worked less, part-time workers. This standard was then used to compare the number of women in this group doing short-day, with the number doing long-day, work. The eight-hour workday, disregarding overtime and half time on Saturdays, is used as a basis for Table 16.

TABLE 16.—LENGTH OF WORKING DAY OF 159 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS EMPLOYED BY THE WEEK

Length of working day	Mothers working each specified number of hours	
	Number	Per cent
Less than 5 hours	7	4.4
5 hours and less than 6 hours	25	15.7
6 hours and less than 7 hours	11	6.9
7 hours and less than 8 hours	9	5.7
Total less than 8 hours	52	32.7
8 hours and less than 9 hours	29	18.2
9 hours and less than 10 hours	48	30.3
10 hours and less than 11 hours	25	15.7
11 hours and over	5	3.1
Total 8 hours and over	107	67.3
Total	159	100.0

The group of 52 part-time workers in the table above consisted of 49 women in domestic and personal service and three in trade and transportation. The group of 107 full-time workers consisted of 46 women in domestic and personal service, five in trade and transportation, and 56 in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.

Nearly a third of the women were working less than eight hours a day. Of this number, the principal group, 16 per cent of the entire 159, were working between five and six hours a day. They were the half-timers found in special occupations. Two-thirds were working eight hours and over. Of these women, the largest group, 30 per cent of the entire 159, were working between nine and ten hours a day.

The significance of the length of the working hours in a study of wage-earning women lies in their relation to the home life of the women. Their influence is to be traced in the physical condition of the women and in the condition of their homes. The influence of the hours of work on the wages paid is, as we shall see in the next chapter, less important than might be expected. The women who work by the day were excluded from the foregoing table. Unless in great necessity, they do not go out more than five days in the week. They consider that Saturday belongs to their own homes. Some of them who do not need to work more than half time, find they can keep up their homes better by working out three whole days in the week than by taking a regular half-time job that requires attendance on six days. The customary hours are from 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. The actual observance of these hours depends on the personal adjustment between mistress and charwoman. A small boy said when I called shortly after 5 o'clock on Thursday to see his mother, "I don't know when mamma will be home. She is at a house where she always stays late." However, as the custom of employing domestic workers by the day and the number of women doing such work increases, the hours as well as the wages tend to become standard. The great

advantage of an 8 to 5 o'clock day over a factory day, as well as the better wages, causes many of the women to stick to day's work in spite of its irregularity and insecurity.

Many of the short-day workers were public cleaners in offices and theaters. The following table shows the average hours worked daily and weekly in different kinds of buildings.

TABLE 17.—AVERAGE DAILY AND WEEKLY HOURS OF WORK OF THE 82 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ENGAGED IN PUBLIC CLEANING, ACCORDING TO KIND OF BUILDING

Kind of building	Mothers employed as specified	AVERAGE HOURS OF WORK OF MOTHER	
		Daily	Weekly
Office building	31	5¾	33½
Theater	29	7⅓	47½
Store	9	8¼	49½
Factory	4	9¾	58½
Hospital	3	7⅔	46
Church	2	8½	50
School	2	9	54
Railway cars	2	9¼	60
Total	82	7	43½

It must be noted in connection with the column showing the average hours worked weekly that some of the women worked either a half day or whole day on Sunday.

In the two kinds of buildings which require the least number of hours' work daily, offices and theaters, the advantages of the short day are almost nullified by the split-time arrangement and its inconveniences for the

women. The building is turned over to them at the times when everybody else is through with it, and only then. The primitive customs of domestic work, where a woman is expected to be on duty at any and all hours of the twenty-four, have their influence on the housekeeping régime of building superintendents. The tenants of the building must accommodate themselves to the presence of porters and window washers and their cleaning operations during the day. But the scrubwoman and her activities are relegated to the early morning and late evening before and after office workers have vacated the premises. This means that the woman must make two trips a day to her work.

The working day, which is standardized in some buildings to occupy not more than five and one-half hours, is divided into two "tricks" of three hours and two and one-half hours each. The first is from 6 a. m. to 9 a. m., and the second from 5 p. m. to 7:30 p. m. These are the hours for which the women are engaged in the better managed buildings; but they are not always adhered to. In some buildings the women work "till they get through" and their evening work is likely to be disorganized by overtime workers in the offices. In their coming and going they are familiar sights in the business districts. Shortly after 9 a. m. they may be seen leaving the large office buildings in groups and at 5 p. m. returning singly and in pairs. Between 7 and 8, again they leave the building, only to be on their way back to it the next morning at 6 o'clock.

In theaters, the cleaning is similarly divided into two tricks on matinee days. Here it is not a question of a long day, for the hours worked are not long except in

occasional instances. In most of the theaters, the hours are 8 a. m. to 5 p. m., except on matinee days, when the women work from 8 a. m. to 1 p. m. and 5 p. m. to 6 p. m. Some theaters have matinees twice a week, others every day. The cleaners must then return at the close of the afternoon to tidy up and "pick up papers." As soon as the curtain has fallen and while the audience is leaving the house, they may be seen springing up as if by magic among the seats, gathering into their aprons the scattered programs and other waste left on the floor. In an hour or so they are ready to go home again. This afternoon chore is regarded as of equal value with the morning's work, and in one theater the woman is docked a half-day's pay if she fails to appear for this hour's work.

Practically all the women walk to work. Out of a wage of $6.00 a week, to pay 20 cents a day for carfare is out of the question. From twenty minutes to a half hour is what most of them reported as the time they spent in going from their homes to their work. One woman, when asked how long it took her to walk to work replied that she could walk the distance in twenty minutes "when her feet were all right." Another woman said there were some nights when she rode home on the car "even if it took her last nickel." In no case was carfare paid in consideration of the inconvenient hours of the split-time arrangement. The practice of the New York Telephone Company, for instance, which pays its split-time operators an extra compensation of 60 cents a week for carfare,* found no imitators among the employers of scrubwomen.

* Investigation of Telephone Companies. United States Bureau of Labor, 1910.

The hours of the laundry workers, candy factory workers, and other factory employes are regulated by law and limited to sixty hours a week.* The normal working day for them is from 7:30 a. m. to 6 p. m. with half an hour off for dinner. But overtime is common and I have more than once seen women come into their homes at 9 o'clock in the evening in a shocking state of exhaustion.

Here is an extract from an investigator's note book which describes such a home-coming:

The visitor called at 9 p. m. on Mrs. Sanford, a shaker in a steam laundry. Mrs. Sanford was found sleeping on a sofa near the door, where she had apparently dropped down on coming in from the laundry a half hour before. Her hat lay on the sofa beside her. An old woman was moving about the room and preparing to feed Mrs. Sanford's four-months'-old baby which lay in the rocking chair wrapped in a blanket. Neither the operations of the old nurse nor the arrival of the visitor disturbed the laundry worker, who lay across the sofa like a dead person and awakened only when the old woman shook her violently by the arm.

And here another extract from a note book:

Monday evening, March 14. Visitor was present when Mrs. Regan returned from her work at the shirtwaist factory where she operates a buttonhole machine. It was 10 p. m. when Mrs. Regan reached home, having left the workroom at 9:30. Her lips were dry and parched; her voice sounded thick and hoarse, and she swallowed frequently. "You look as if your tonsils might be swollen, Mrs. Regan," said the

* This investigation was made before the amendment to the labor law was passed reducing the legal limit of working hours for women from sixty to fifty-four hours a week, which went into effect October 1, 1912. A law prohibiting the employment of women in factories before 6 a.m. or after 10 p.m. went into effect July 1, 1913.

A Victim of the Long Day

After the day's work in the laundry the mother must work all evening at home

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visitor. "Oh, no," she said, "I'm only tired." Her eyes had a peculiar fixed stare. She was very talkative and began telling a lengthy circumstantial story about one of the day's happenings in the shop. A few moments later she repeated the same story, detail for detail, having apparently wholly forgotten in the meantime that she had told it. In the course of further conversation, she retold two other stories each as detailed as the first. She was in an extreme state of fatigue.

A third extract reads:

Mrs. Ambrosiano came across the street from the laundry at 8 o'clock. She took the baby from Marie and sat down in a chair with the child in her arms. She kept saying as she fondled the baby, "Oh, my back! Oh, my arms!"

Yet another extract:

Called at Mrs. Murtha's, a costume worker's, at 9 p. m. Found the kitchen door standing open. The three children were alone and still up waiting for their mother, as they were afraid to go to bed without her. Annie, the oldest, said her mother was working Sundays, too, as it was rush season at the shop.

The hotel workers, as well as the factory employes, furnished instances of excessive hours. The work in the store room or pantry usually means a long day alternating with a short day. A common arrangement of the pantry girl's hours was 6 a. m. to 12 noon and 6 p. m. to 12 midnight. The following day her hours were 12 noon to 6 p. m. Another arrangement was 6 a. m. to 10 a. m. and 2 p. m. to 8 p. m. daily. A straight shift runs from 7 a. m. to 5 p. m.

These long hours are likely to be prolonged at any time by a banquet or an unusual number of guests in the hotel. One woman working in a fashionable res-

taurant was often kept on duty till 4 a. m. on nights when she should have gone home at midnight. Another, who worked in a hotel laundry, was working late every night owing to a "convention of teachers at the hotel from out of town." The hours of the chambermaids are usually 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. or 7 a. m. to 4 p. m. The chambermaids are also required to be on watch duty in the halls once or twice a week until midnight.

While the hours of most hotel workers are excessive, those of the scrubwomen are inhumanly long. They are on duty from twelve to fourteen hours a day. In most of the hotels they work from 2 a. m. to 4 p. m. On Sundays it is customary for them to have a shorter day, working only until 11 a. m. or 12. On the other hand, one day in every four or five is an extra long day, when they are on watch duty in the halls until 11 p. m. It is common for a hotel scrubwoman to work from sixty-five to seventy-two hours a week. That the women are perfectly submissive to these conditions is undoubtedly due, at least in part, to the complete stultification of spirit to which a life of monotonous toil has reduced them.

The following shows the typical life of a hotel scrubwoman:

When Elisabeth Becker was a little girl about ten years old, she began living out as a nurse girl. At the age of twelve, she went to work in a candy factory, where she earned $2.00 a week. Next she went downtown to work in a fan factory, but because it was too far, left without working her week out. Next she went to a cigarette factory where she made cigarettes and got $4.50 a week. From there she went to a candle factory on Fourteenth Street, working at the machine where candles were molded. This was quite dangerous work as

the hot wax spattered a good deal; but she earned $7.00 a week and remained a year.

At fifteen, Elisabeth was married. Her husband drank heavily and died finally of tuberculosis. During the greater part of her married life she went out working by the day, washing and cleaning. For seven years she worked continuously as scrubwoman in hotels. For three years she worked in a Broadway hotel and subsequently in several different hotels on Fifth Avenue and vicinity. Her hours were from 2 a. m. to 4 p. m., with time off for breakfast at 7 and luncheon at 11. She worked on Sundays till 7 a. m. and on one night out of every four was on duty till 11 p. m.

The hours of full-time waitresses in restaurants are excessively long. In most restaurants they must be present from 8 a. m. to 8 p. m. In the larger and better organized establishments, they are given two half-hours off during the day for meals and also a half-hour's recess, or "swing," as they call it, in the morning and again in the afternoon. That this twelve-hour day still continues in an occupation followed largely by women seems a peculiarly stubborn survival of unenlightened law-making. Scarcely any woman who is keeping up even the pretense of a home can undertake to work as a full-time waitress. Yet there was one woman on my list who was doing it—working seventy-two hours a week. During the twelve hours of her daily absence, her little boy was cared for in the public school just six hours. For the remaining six, he lived in doorways and on the street. This was an exceptional instance and could not long continue. The full-time waitress' work can only be done by women without family relations or home ties of any sort. They must be devotees of labor.

There is, however, considerable opportunity for half-

time and part-time work in restaurants. The heavy rush of patronage during the luncheon hour makes it necessary to employ extra waitresses for the midday meals. Indeed, there are some large downtown restaurants that are open for only a few hours in the middle of the day. During the rest of the twenty-four hours the plant is wholly unused. The short shifts are five to seven hours in length. Some of the waitresses "go in" at 12 noon and work till 5 p. m. Others work from 10:30 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. The seven-hour shift lasts from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. The part-timers, however, are not allowed recesses or time off for meals.

It is evident that the hours of this work make it attractive to the married woman who finds it necessary to earn. If her children are of school age she has time to see them off to school before she goes to work and is back at home again soon after they are dismissed from school. If she has a child below school age so that it must be looked after in a day nursery or by a neighbor, she can take it for at least an hour's airing after her day's work is over.

The manager of the restaurant in a large department store writes concerning his department: "We employ 155 waitresses. Only 30 of them work full time. Of these, 27 are single and three are married. There are 125 working half time, or five hours. Forty of these are married women, 30 are widows, and 55 are single. Some half-time employes seek these positions because they afford them an opportunity of caring for their homes; others because they thus have an opportunity of working in the evening. Some of them are theater ushers."

Half-time work among saleswomen is not uncommon,

with hours from 12 m. to 6 p. m. The hours appeal to the women for the same reason that the half-time waiting does. The following advertisement which appeared in a leading New York daily in January, 1911, illustrates the kind of position offered to women whose home obligations make it impossible for them to work the entire day, but whose circumstances make it necessary for them to earn what they can:

> *Afternoon Employment.*
>
> A prominent department store can utilize the services of a number of intelligent women as sales clerks in various departments from 12 o'clock noon to 6 p. m. daily; permanent positions open only to those whose circumstances make afternoon employment desirable; previous experience not absolutely necessary.

Unfortunately, both of the occupations that offer half-time employment at a convenient time of the day —saleswork and waiting—are out of the reach of the average West Side woman. She has acquired irregular habits in her housework, or careless habits of dress which diminish her personal pride and self-confidence. She fears to present herself anywhere except at a factory door, the servants' entrance of a hotel, or the janitor's office of a large building. Doubtless some of the women who are doing menial work could do much higher grade work if they had a chance to try.

A considerable amount of Sunday work was discovered. In fact, 10 per cent of the 370 women were working a half day or whole day on Sundays. There is something scarcely less than monstrous in the situation which requires the mother of a family to go to work

seven days in the week. All hotel attendants, nearly all the theater cleaners, and the two railway car cleaners, did Sunday work. There were some theaters where during the winter season the women worked all day Sunday; others where they worked till 1 o'clock; others where they worked two or three Sundays in the month. The railway car cleaners worked all day on alternate Sundays.

An instance of Sunday work was the case of Mrs. Carson. She had been employed three years at the same theater as cleaner. During winter months she worked on Sundays and received $9.00 a week; her wages were $7.50 the rest of the year. Sunday hours were 7:30 a. m. to 4 p. m., or "until you get through."

Mrs. Mary Carter, who had been a cleaner at the same concert hall for the last six years "off and on," had two children, one daughter of five and another of eight months. Mrs. Carter said she was "even more foolish about this second baby than about the first." When the visitor called one evening, the mother was admiring the baby as it "sat up." "It's the first time I've seen her do it," she explained. "You see I work Sundays, and she's generally too sleepy to play when I get home nights."

There is some night work as well as Sunday work among theater charwomen. Each time a new play is put on, the stage is thoroughly scrubbed. As this is a very special chore outside the usual day's work, it always means night duty or overtime. Some moving picture places which are open all day and every evening are scrubbed at night. The women go to work at 11 p. m. and return home at 7 a. m., seven nights in the week. One woman had a four years' record of work in

such a place. In another moving picture establishment an attempt was made to obviate the night work by allowing some of the work to be done during the morning. The hours were 6 a. m. to 2 p. m., and no time was allowed for meals. The Sunday hours were just the same, except that the women were permitted to snatch a few moments for a hasty breakfast at 9 o'clock.

Seasonal variation in their work is another difficulty with which the women who must have regular work are compelled to contend. Many of the theaters close for the summer; the laundries and candy factories and garment factories are slack in that season. A few of the women manage to dovetail two fairly regular occupations. One woman is a theater cleaner in the winter and an awning maker in summer. Another, who is in the garment trade, goes to Atlantic City as a waitress in the summer. Another theater cleaner whose work lasts only during the opera season becomes a caretaker in a Madison Avenue house during the family's residence in the country.

However, these combinations of employment mean a change from one dwelling to another and other changes to which a woman with a family finds it difficult to adjust herself. She has not the mobility of an unmarried worker. Moreover, the finding of two occupations to fill out the year requires more ingenuity than the average working woman can be assumed to possess. As already pointed out, there is no adequate labor exchange for women's work to help in making such combinations. She usually tries to fill in her enforced vacation with charring by the day. There are at least private employment offices through which she can secure day-by-day engagements to wash and clean. How-

ever, this kind of work also falls off in the summer time when so many of the employing families have gone to the country. As Mrs. Carbury said, "The worst months for the laboring man is January and February, but the worst months for the working woman is July and August."

The slack season in the factory is more difficult in some ways for the woman to weather than the enforced vacation at the theaters. Perhaps the factory slows down to three-quarters or half-time, or to a few days' work in the week. But the operative stays close at home on the chance of being sent for at any time when work starts again. Thus she is prevented from doing other jobs at which she might be earning. She is effectively prevented at the same time from improving the idle days as a vacation. Carrying some fresh-air excursion tickets in August to a laundry worker, for herself and her children, I was told that she could not afford to use them. At that time she was working at the laundry only at odd intervals during the week, but she dared not leave home lest the foreman should happen to send for her in her absence.

Vacations with pay were but rarely reported. A few of the office cleaners had had a week's vacation with pay during the year, but many of these had worked a year and longer in the same building. The office cleaners are a steady folk on the whole, seldom shifting their places. Their steadiness merits a regular system of vacations in return. Doubtless one reason that such a system does not prevail is that they are faithful as to work and silent as to demands.

To glance back over what has been said of hours of work and seasons of employment: The hours of work

were irregular and chaotic. A large proportion of the women worked out day by day and had no regular weekly schedule of hours. In a specially selected group consisting of 159 week workers, 33 per cent were working less than eight hours a day and 67 per cent eight hours and over. The short-day workers were employed mostly in offices and theaters as cleaners and as waitresses. The advantages of the short day in office and theater cleaning are largely nullified by the split-time arrangement, causing the women to spend so much time walking to and from work. The short-shift waitress' work on the other hand combines advantageously with the mother's home duties, and such work is much sought after. Similar part-time work as sales clerks is available. Excessive hours of work were found among the factory workers and hotel workers. Ten per cent of all the women were doing Sunday work. The group of human instances given illustrates the unnecessary hardships as to hours of work which will inevitably exist so long as this stratum of woman's work continues in a limbo of general neglect and unconcern.

CHAPTER V

WAGES AND INCOME

WOMEN'S wages on the West Side are not affected by competition with men. As a rule, the women follow the traditional domestic occupations of their sex and the men the traditional outdoor occupations of theirs. They work in separate, non-competing worlds. This is especially true of the married women at work, who are for the most part engaged in some form of domestic labor. Even those who go into the factories do not replace the men there. They perform some new process or some new subdivision of a process. For instance, the innovation of "package" goods has created for them a new field of low-paid packing jobs in which men are not and never were employed. Hence the West Side does not offer a field where the wages of women and men in the same occupations can be profitably compared.

In an investigation of women's work and wages made in Birmingham, England, it was found that "whenever women had replaced men, the former had received a much lower wage, and that this wage was not proportionate to the skill or intelligence required by the work but approximated to a certain fixed level—about 10 shillings to 12 shillings per week. The wage that the man previously received gave no criterion as to what the woman would get, though as a general statement, approximately correct, we may say that a woman

would get from one-third to one-half the wages of a man." *

Since the division of labor between men and women on the West Side is so well marked, no comparison similar to that made in Birmingham can be undertaken. But the wages of male and female workers of the same family, or the earnings of a group of women and those of their husbands or brothers can be usefully compared. For instance, the wife of a West Side man who earns $12 is usually able to earn but $6.00, irrespective of the employment of each. Both sexes in the same family will have the same amount of education and the same social and living standards. These factors, as well as the work done, determine wage levels, for they largely determine the especial grade of work the individual is able to perform in whatever occupation he follows.

While statistics on this head were not available, the writer's familiarity with West Side family incomes, based on acquaintance with a far larger number of families than the special group considered in this study, indicates that a woman earns about one-half as much as a man earns.

The standard of women's earnings in comparison with men's is thus somewhat higher than in the English town cited, where the average woman's wage sometimes falls to one-third that of a man.

The statements regarding wages of the workers in the families studied came usually from the mother; for it was she who kept the budget and watched the rise and fall of the family income through the year. The figures given were carefully checked by the investigator's

* Cadbury, Edward, Mathesan, M. C., and Shann, George: Women's Work and Wages, p. 119. Chicago, University Press, 1907.

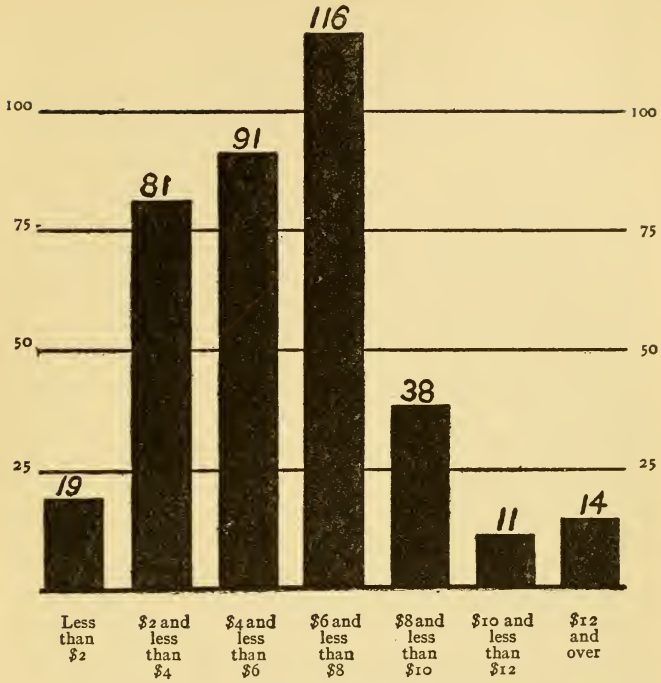
knowledge of industrial conditions gained in more than two years' close association with West Side conditions.

First of all, the weekly earnings of the women alone must be considered. For the sake of establishing a standard, it is assumed for the present that the current earnings of the workers were continuous through the year. In Table 18 the weekly earnings of the mothers are given.

TABLE 18.—WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Weekly earnings	MOTHERS	
	Number	Per cent
Less than $1.00	3	.8
$1.00 and less than $2.00	16	4.3
$2.00 and less than $3.00	34	9.2
$3.00 and less than $4.00	47	12.7
$4.00 and less than $5.00	48	13.0
$5.00 and less than $6.00	43	11.6
$6.00 and less than $7.00	77	20.9
$7.00 and less than $8.00	39	10.6
$8.00 and less than $9.00	19	5.1
$9.00 and less than $10.00	19	5.1
$10.00 and less than $11.00	9	2.4
$11.00 and less than $12.00	2	.5
$12.00 and over	14	3.8
Total	370	100.0

Of the women studied, 56 per cent, more than half, earned from $4.00 to $8.00 a week. Seventy-seven of the women, 21 per cent, were earning $6.00 and less than $7.00. In the accompanying diagram the women who earn from $6.00 to $8.00 a week stand out as the great divide, with those earning more or less falling away on both sides to the low foothills of exceptional instances.



WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS.

[The height of each column is proportional to the number of mothers whose weekly earnings fall within the limits indicated at the foot of the column.]

Sunday work is the only thing which is almost certain to increase wages. The seven-day workers are likely to earn more than the standard wage of $6.00 a week. One-third of the women working Sundays were being paid $9.00 a week and the average for the whole group (37 in number) was $7.50. The reason for the better rate is apparent. No woman, even when pressed

back to her last bulwarks, will leave her home and children to go to work on Sundays—except for a premium. Mrs. Manley, who cleans the office in which this report is being written, works six days in the week for $6.00. Just after her husband's death she used to clean in a nearby theater seven days in the week for $9.00. "But I couldn't keep that up at no price," she said. "My Annie used to cry so about my going off on Sundays. 'It's just as if I didn't have no father nor mother either,' she'd say." So Mrs. Manley sacrificed a third of her income to stay at home with Annie on Sundays.

But short of Sunday work, it did not appear that long hours made for higher wages. In fact, many of the lowest paid workers were laundry employes toiling sixty hours a week. Some of these women were receiving but $4.50 for the week's work. I asked one of them, an indomitable Irish woman, how much she earned. "Now don't faint when I tell ye," she kindly admonished. "I git *seven cents* an hour!"

The women were not reluctant to talk of their earnings. On the contrary, they were keenly interested in discussing the subject, and some of them displayed an amazing capacity for detail in their narratives. For them, life resolves itself largely into a drama of wages. Making both ends meet on six to nine dollars a week is so absorbing an experience that little time is left for any other. A fifty-cent raise that happened ten or twenty years ago was not forgotten. Rather, it stood out like a milestone in their working lives. The maiden job with all its attendant petty events, the first small but hopeful raises, the quick arrival at stability and discouragement, the marriage that was vainly trusted to establish one safely in a home of one's own

—it was always the same story, with the words "five dollars," "six dollars," "eight dollars," and "nine dollars" occurring again and again like a sordid refrain.

A few personal histories from the records, as the women themselves gave them, show the surprising vividness with which details of work, wages, and hours were recalled from long-past years.

Mary Winkelman went to the German school. "One morning I was dressed and going off to school when my sister came running home and said I could get a job if I came right over to the factory. I dropped my books and went along back with her. I wasn't quite ten years old then, and I'm working ever since! It was a place where salt bags were made, and I got a job as 'doffer.' I had been there only four weeks when the company moved to Yonkers. I had made $3.60 a week. My next job was 'needle winding' in the twine factory. I worked there ten years and only left to get married. As needle winder, I earned $3.00 by the week. Afterwards I learned to sew hammocks and was earning about $12 a week by the piece when I quit. There were four months slack every summer. Then I used to work in the cigarette factory as a stamper for $6.00 a week."

Jessie Kane was the oldest of five children when her mother died. "I was twelve years old," she said, "and my aunt took me home with her. I went to work in the cigar factory as a stripper at fourteen. We were paid by the piece. I earned $3.50 the first week and the same amount the second week. That was record wages for a beginner. The third week I pushed up to $5.00, but there I stuck for about two years. I was discouraged at not being able to earn more, so I went into another factory as 'bander' and 'paster.' That was 'wick work' (week work) and I got $7.00 for it. I stayed two years and a half at this place. One of the managers was acquainted with my folks. From that I changed about a lot,

always trying to better myself. I was 'buncher' for a while, and got $6.00 a week; then 'roller,' making $8.00 to $9.00. I was a 'selecter' when I married and was making between $8.00 and $9.00 regular."

Celia Grogan went to work in the biscuit factory at sixteen. She packed crackers and cakes by hand. "In those days the crackers were put on the table and we picked them up and handled them. Now they have more machinery about it. My first wages, by the week, was $3.50. Then I was raised to $4.00, then to $4.50, then to $5.50. I was married from that factory at twenty-one. Two months after I wanted to help my husband and went back to my old job. They took me back at $5.50 and I worked a whole year—right up till my baby came—for that much."

When Elizabeth Gorman was fourteen years old, she went to work in the cigarette factory as errand girl. "I got $2.50 a week. But before long I learned to cut cigarettes and for this I got $4.50 a week. At lunch and odd times, the girls that rolled taught me how, and I got so smart at that I could make between $8.00 and $9.00 at it."

Margaret Adams "lived out" from the age of ten until she was fifteen. "My wages was $5.50 a month. My aunt collected the money and spent it for me. At fifteen, I went to stay with another aunt in New Jersey, where a shirt factory was just being started. They sent operators down from New York to teach the country girls shirt making. I learned to operate the buttonhole machine. To this day I can't work a buttonhole by hand. We were paid by the piece, and I made about $7.00 a week. Then I learned to set sleeves and averaged $8.00 to $9.00 a week. I lived with my aunt and paid $3.00 a week for board. Sometimes in the summer I used to stay at home and help my aunt make jelly. That was the happiest time of my life."

Mamie Demarest was fifteen when she went to work in the Riverside Laundry as a shaker. "I worked there three years and three months steady and then quit to get married. I didn't expect ever to work in a laundry again, but Mr. Dobson, the manager, gave me a recommendation when I quit. I was shaker first at $4.00 a week. On the mangle, I got first $5.00 and then $6.00. At collar and cuff ironing I made $6.00. Then Mrs. Dobson, the manager's wife, taught me shirt ironing and I made $12 a week by the piece. I could iron 60 shirts a day. But I hadn't the strength to keep it up—you have to bear down so on the iron. So I settled down to marking at $8.00 a week."

Kitty Farr came to New York from Scotland when she was twelve years old. She had already worked two years in the linen factory on the Scotch half-time system, going to school one half the day and to the factory the other half. "I used to make what would come to 40 cents a week here," she said. "After I come over, I lived out with some people who paid me $4.00 a month and treated me like a member of the family. Then I left that place for a job in the cigarette factory, where I made $5.00 a week. The last place I worked before I married was in a hammock factory. My husband—he worked there too—and me used to average together about $9.00 a week."

When Theresa Morley was about thirteen years old she went to work in a flax factory. "I worked at a frame," she said, "and got $4.50 a week. After a year and a half I changed to the cigarette factory. We packed cigarettes by hand. It was piece work and I used to make from $1.10 to $1.20 a day."

Louisa Goebel was born 35 miles from Berlin, Germany. "The first place I went to service, I earned 11 Thaler a year, that is, $8.25. The smartest girls all went to service in Berlin because their pay was higher there, 30 Thaler, or $22.50 a year. So I went to Berlin too. But I did not stay

long. I was fifteen when I came to my uncle's in New York, and my first place at service paid me $14 a month." This seemed like riches indeed to Louisa. But she found the kitchen work much harder than she had been accustomed to. The duties of a "Mädchen" in a German kitchen, where so much of the food is brought from the bakery and delicatessen, are very simple compared with what the American kitchen "help" has to do in the way of preparing foods.

Eliza Stebbins began as a cash girl. "I was eleven years old and earned $1.50 a week. After a year I changed to the box factory. I got so smart I could cover 1,000 boxes a day. They were small square boxes for gelatin that had to be covered with the label. We covered them by hand. The regular rate was 18 cents a hundred, but after I got so swift they reduced my rate to 15 cents a hundred. Anyway, I earned as high as $9.00 usually, and sometimes $11."

Jennie Cowan went into the box factory at eleven years of age. "I worked two weeks and three days for nothing, then they put me on piece work. In a month's time, I was making $5.00 to $6.00 a week. I've been working at that place ever since, except just when my babies came, and I'm still making about $5.50 a week. It's nineteen years, as you might say, that I haven't had a raise."

The mothers who had once come to this country from Ireland and Germany as strong, well-grown young women received from $10 to $15 a month in domestic service. Out of this sum, they saved money to send home to their parents or to put away against the day of their marriage. The charwomen earn more in money wages than they once did as servants. But the cost of rent, food, and fuel can barely be met out of their present earnings, and savings cannot be thought of. For this reason some of the middle-aged Irish and German women recall their years at service as a sort of golden

age in their lives and declare that if they did not have children to provide for they would gladly return to that mode of life.

The ages of the women varied from that of the youngest girl mother to that of the oldest grandmother. The youngest worker was seventeen, the oldest sixty-three, with the bulk of them between thirty and forty-five. The question arises, Had their ages any effect on their earnings?

TABLE 19. — AVERAGE, MINIMUM, AND MAXIMUM WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO AGES

Age	Number of mothers	WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MOTHER		
		Average	Minimum	Maximum
Less than 25 years	12	$6.53	$3.00	$ 9.00
25 years and less than 30 years	22	6.27	4.00	11.00
30 years and less than 35 years	84	5.86	1.50	15.00
35 years and less than 40 years	102	5.71	.75	33.00
40 years and less than 45 years	75	5.58	1.00	12.00
45 years and less than 50 years	50	5.33	.70	15.00
50 years and over	25	4.35	.75	12.00
Total	370	$5.63	$ .70	$33.00

From Table 19 it appears that age is a factor in the women's pay. Their earnings decline with their advancing years. The lowest wage group includes the low earnings of the tenement janitresses, who also fall into the highest age groups.

In Table 20, showing the wages by occupations, the low wage of the janitresses is to be seen.

The usual rate for cleaning by the day is $1.50. In a high grade exchange which sends women into the most fashionable residences, the rate is $2.00 a day; but few

TABLE 20. — AVERAGE, MINIMUM, AND MAXIMUM WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONS

Occupation	Number of mothers	WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MOTHER		
		Average	Minimum	Maximum
Day's worker	90	$5.00	$ .75	$12.00
Public cleaner	82	6.44	1.50	12.00
Janitress	49	3.52	.70	6.00
Laundry worker	33	6.16	4.00	12.00
Hotel worker	12	4.83	3.23	8.08
Garment worker	12	9.15	1.75	33.00
Laundress (at home)	11	2.25	.75	3.00
Seamstress	10	5.30	1.25	10.00
Newsdealer or fruit dealer	8	5.13	4.00	6.00
Saleswoman	7	6.93	4.50	13.00
Waitress	5	6.80	4.50	9.00
Candy factory operative	5	4.70	3.50	7.00
Other occupations	46	7.28	1.50	12.00
Total	370	$5.63	$ .70	$33.00

of the West Side women have the training or the references for admission to such an exchange. Carfare is paid sometimes by the employer, sometimes not, but the women are coming to ask for it more and more as part of their regular compensation.

The average weekly earnings for day's work are so low ($5.00) because the group includes a number of women who worked only three or four days in the week,

or just as many days as were necessary to bring in the "couple o' dollars" which, added to the earnings of husband or children, secured the family's existence. The women who took in washing at home earned a yet lower average, $2.25 a week, and for much the same reason.

The wages of public cleaners, laundry workers, hotel workers, garment workers, saleswomen, waitresses, candy factory operators, and most of the other occupations are paid by the week. The average amounts given represent the total earning capacity of the women for six, and in some cases seven, days of the week.

The earnings of public cleaners in different kinds of buildings are seen in Table 21.

TABLE 21.—AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS OF THE 82 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ENGAGED IN PUBLIC CLEANING, ACCORDING TO KIND OF BUILDING

Kind of building	Number of mothers	Average weekly earnings of mother
Office building	31	$5.48
Theater	29	7.58
Store	9	6.00
Factory	4	6.50
Hospital	3	5.55
School	2	7.04
Railway car	2	8.08
Church	2	5.94
Total	82	$6.44

In view of what has been said with regard to the racial make-up of the population in this district, the earnings of the women by nationalities may be of interest.

TABLE 22. — AVERAGE, MINIMUM, AND MAXIMUM WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO NATIONALITY

Nationality	Number of mothers	WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MOTHER		
		Average	Minimum	Maximum
American . .	79	$6.36	$ .75	$12.00
Irish-American .	44	5.06	1.25	9.31
German-American	45	4.49	.70	11.00
Irish . . .	95	5.91	1.50	12.00
German . . .	36	5.30	1.25	15.00
English . . .	16	5.69	1.50	15.00
Italian . . .	19	4.11	2.31	7.00
Other races . .	36	6.55	1.50	33.00 [a]
Total . . .	370	$5.63	$ .70	$33.00

[a] This unusually high wage was earned by a French woman as cutter in a fashionable dressmaking establishment.

EARNINGS OF PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME WORKERS

In considering the time schedules of the 159 workers employed by the week for whom information on this point was secured, a wide range in daily working hours was found—from five to ten hours a day. Those working less than eight hours a day were called part-time workers and those working eight hours or more, full-time workers. The earnings of the part-time workers and full-time workers of this group are compared in Table 23.

Here we see 90 per cent of the part-timers earning less than $8.00 a week, as compared with 72 per cent of the full-timers. The difference between the average wage of part-timers and full-timers amounts to a little more than one dollar.

It might be supposed that the short-day workers are engaged in the better paid occupations—that they are performing some kind of mental labor rather than manual labor and receiving a correspondingly higher reward. But this is not the case. The character of the work done by the short-day and long-day workers is much

TABLE 23.—WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 52 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS WORKING PART TIME, COMPARED WITH WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 107 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS WORKING FULL TIME

Weekly earnings	Mothers working part time		Mothers working full time	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Less than $4.00	2	3.9	3	2.8
$4.00 and less than $5.00	8	15.4	11	10.3
$5.00 and less than $6.00	16	30.8	9	8.4
$6.00 and less than $7.00	15	28.8	35	32.7
$7.00 and less than $8.00	6	11.5	19	17.8
$8.00 and less than $9.00	1	1.9	12	11.2
$9.00 and less than $10.00	3	5.8	9	8.4
$10.00 and over	1	1.9	9	8.4
Total	52	100.0	107	100.0
Average weekly earnings	$5.94		$7.11	

the same. Both are limited to the occupations open to women without education. We find some of them, for instance, working five hours a day in a restaurant for $4.50 a week, and others working ten hours a day for $6.00. Office cleaners working between five and six hours daily earn $5.00 a week, while scrubwomen in department stores work between eight and nine hours and are paid $6.00. The explanation does not lie in difference of occupations. The reason seems to be that a

premium is placed on regularity and punctuality out of all proportion to the actual amount of labor performed or service rendered. In order to secure the daily presence of the women within certain stated hours, the employer is compelled to pay almost as much as if he wanted them to work the whole day through. He must pay a minimum to insure regularity.

Under the circumstances, then, why do any of the women cross the eight-hour threshold, when it means only a dollar additional? The answer for most of them lies in the value of the dollar. After all, the difference between a five-dollar and a six-dollar budget is enormous if the mother is the sole wage-earner. If, however, there are other wage-earners in the family, she may save half her time for the home at the sacrifice of one-sixth of her wage.

YEARLY INCOMES

The wages we have been considering thus far were not earned throughout the year. They represent the actual wages of the women when employed and do not allow for seasonal work, sickness, or other irregularities. These allowances must be made, however, in discussing the yearly incomes of the families.

The earnings of the women were reduced through the year by many causes, such as the closing of the theaters during the summer months, the slack summer work in laundries, sickness of the women themselves or in the family, loss of work and delay in finding another place. On the other hand, some of the women had only worked as long as the husband was out of work. This meant two months or three months of employment during the year. In all these instances the total earnings of the

mother when distributed over the entire year resulted in a greatly reduced average income.

Among the men, irregularity of employment was far more pronounced than among the women. Many of the latter had worked steadily throughout the year, if not at one thing at another, doing whatever came handy. Similarly, the daughters of the family proved to have been more steadily employed than the sons. As we have already seen, 16 per cent of the boys and 8 per cent of the girls were out of work at the time when the family was visited.

In estimating the yearly incomes of the families, allowance was made for loss of wages in the course of the year from the various causes. It cannot be claimed that the allowance was absolutely exact in every case. The estimates were based on the statements of the mother, who, as chief purchasing agent for the family, was in possession of the facts. Naturally, these women were not expert accountants, but the necessity for keeping strictly within their meager incomes whets their memory for receipts and disbursements. The estimated yearly earnings of the women and girls are offered with considerable confidence in their accuracy. On the whole, their incomes were more measurable than in the cases of the men and boys, because so many of the latter were casuals whose yearly earnings could only be roughly approximated. However, the returns for all were carefully studied and the estimates painstakingly prepared. In addition it was possible to check the figures by the investigator's familiarity with the standard of comfort in the individual family and with local conditions of employment and standard of wages. The results may be seen in the tables which follow.

The 55 widows who were the sole wage-earners in their families were earning an average yearly income of $353. From other sources was added an average of $42. These other sources included a few lodgers and several

TABLE 24.—AVERAGE YEARLY INCOMES OF THE FAMILIES OF 55 WIDOWED WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS WITH NO CHILDREN AT WORK, COMPARED WITH AVERAGE YEARLY INCOMES OF THE FAMILIES OF 70 WIDOWED WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN AT WORK

Source of income	AVERAGE YEARLY INCOMES OF FAMILIES OF	
	Widows with no children at work	Widows with children at work
Families considered . . .	55	70
Amount of income from—		
Earnings of mother . . .	$353.08	$276.64
Earnings of children . . .	.....	469.04
Other sources	42.12	39.52
Total	$395.20	$785.20
Per cent of income from—		
Earnings of mother . . .	89.3	35.2
Earnings of children . . .	....	59.8
Other sources	10.7	5.0
Total	100.0	100.0

cases where charitable organizations were giving a pension or relatives in better circumstances were helping out. But even with these subsidies, the average yearly income was but $395. The average size of this group of families was 3.2 persons.

In the report of the Massachusetts Commission on

Minimum Wage Boards, the following statement is made: "From $9.00 to $11 is believed from this study of budgets to be the living minimum wage for women." * This sum is recommended, it must be remembered, as being adequate for the self-support of a woman worker. The 55 widows whose average weekly income was $7.60 had to keep themselves and two to three children on that sum.

There is an obdurate limit below which the working woman cannot reduce her rent, and another, equally as obdurate, above which she cannot increase her wages. Women's wages and rents are stable on the West Side and the widow is caught between the upper and nether millstones.

The income table shows a striking difference between the incomes of widows with children at work and those whose children are still too young to work. The mother can earn only about so much, whether the children work or not. But as soon as the oldest child gets a job, the family income is almost doubled. With two children at work, it seems almost as if the dark days were past. But the young breadwinner soon begins to feel his importance and to domineer in the family. A son will soon start a family of his own and withdraw his wages from the common fund. In the Cassell family, for instance, the oldest son married at nineteen, while the second son stayed on and was for several years the main support of the family. "How'd you like it, if I was to treat you like Jack did," he would often say to his mother. The threat always had the desired effect, for Mrs. Cassell would disregard the needs of the entire

* Report of the Massachusetts Commission on Minimum Wage Boards, p. 220. House Document No. 1697, January, 1912.

household where her young wage-earner's comfort was concerned.

But the 55 widows were not the only women who had been the sole support of their families for the past year. There were also 30 deserted wives, 11 women with incapacitated husbands, and five whose husbands had been idle for a year, making 46 additional women without a second wage-earner in the family to reinforce their own meager earnings. Altogether there were 101 women who stood between their families and destitution. Out of their meager earnings they were compelled to feed, clothe, and shelter a growing family. Here and there among them was one who had developed under this starvation régime a fine sense for life's little ironies. Mrs. Carson, standing over her washtub late in the evening, remarked that she thought of "taking an apartment on Riverside Drive" and intended to "make a lawyer of Irving and a doctor of Walter."

In Table 25, the 370 families are grouped according to whether the mother alone was at work, whether the mother and children were at work, whether both father and mother were at work, and whether father, mother, and children were at work. This classification does not follow, but is not inconsistent with that of Table 1 (page 19).

The relation between the average size of the family and the average number of wage-earners should be noted. It can be established roughly by comparing the corresponding averages in the second and third columns of Table 25. Of all the persons in the families studied, about half were wage-earners; that is, one wage-earning member was supporting besides himself one member not a wage-earner.

A Family Industry

The mother has just been relieved at her post by the daughter

There is, however, a wide variation in the proportion of wage-earners to members among the different families composing the group. The burden bore heaviest where the mother was the sole wage-earner. Disregarding the influence of age and sex on wage-earning

TABLE 25.—FAMILIES OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ACCORDING TO MEMBERS AT WORK, WITH AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERSONS AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF WAGE-EARNERS IN FAMILIES OF EACH SPECIFIED TYPE

Members of family at work	Families with specified members at work	Average number of persons in family	Average number of wage-earners in family
Mother only at work .	101	3.21	1.00
Mother and children at work	106	4.72	2.71
Mother and father at work	96	4.96	2.00
Mother, father, and children at work . .	67	6.48	3.52
Total	370	4.69	2.21

capacity and the cost of support of individual members, we may say roughly that in families of this type the one wage-earner was supporting besides herself an average of over two persons.

The average yearly earnings of the father, mother, and children in each of the groups above described are to be seen in Table 26.

In families where the mother alone was at work, her average earnings were 88 per cent of the average family income; in families where mother and children were at work, her average earnings were 38 per cent of the

average family income; in families where both mother and father were at work, her earnings were 31 per cent of the average family income; and in families where the

TABLE 26.—FAMILIES OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO MEMBERS AT WORK AND BY AMOUNT AND SOURCES OF AVERAGE YEARLY INCOME

Source of income	AVERAGE YEARLY INCOME OF FAMILIES WITH			
	Mother only at work	Mother and children at work	Mother and father at work	Mother, father, and children at work
Families considered .	101	106	96	67
Amount of income from				
Earnings of father .	.....	.....	$476.32	$498.68
Earnings of mother .	$346.84	$294.32	218.92	209.56
Earnings of children .	.....	450.32	.....	400.92
Other sources . .	46.80	29.12	9.88	3.12
Total . . .	$393.64	$773.76	$705.12	$1,112.28
Per cent of income from				
Earnings of father .	....	....	67.6	44.8
Earnings of mother .	88.1	38.0	31.0	18.8
Earnings of children .	....	58.2	....	36.1
Other sources . .	11.9	3.8	1.4	.3
Total . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

father and children were at work besides the mother, she contributed only 19 per cent of the average income.

Her earnings were lowest where the family income was highest. Apparently, the mother works when she must, and when the necessity is less stringent she re-

laxes her efforts outside and gives more attention to her home. But to give her attention entirely to her home is a luxury which she cannot afford. If she is to have a home at all, she must bring in money to pay rent and buy food.

Too often we hear these women spoken of as if some perversity of instinct drove them to neglect their homes and go to work at the expense of their homes and children. It is for the sake of their children that they work, as mothers have done from time immemorial. The last penny of their earnings is absorbed by their homes. Visit one of them on Saturday night and see how they spend their wages. The money which the woman has earned through the week on her hands and knees is spent in the Tenth Avenue stores and comes back into the home in the form of meat for Sunday's dinner and warm, new clothing for the children. She buys little for herself but the bare necessities, and even these she often foregoes.

The families in which both father and mother were at work were divided into two groups—those in which the children had not yet gone to work, and those in which the children had begun to earn. The difference between these two income groups was mainly one of age; the parents in the latter group were, roughly speaking, five years older, and the children were also five years farther on. With only the parents working, the income averaged $705.12; with one or more children working also, the income averaged $1,112.28. Here, as in the widows' families, the importance of the children's earnings in the family economy is strikingly revealed. The adolescent worker can earn as much as his mother and half as much as his father can earn, in their prime.

To be sure, this premature economic ripening means a correspondingly early decay. But his parents cannot preserve him from wage-earning. He must help them now, as at some future date he must in turn be helped by his own children. Thus each generation, to live, must mortgage the lives of the next.

The 96 families with father and mother at work, averaged 4.96 members, closely approximating the type of family for whom Robert Coit Chapin worked out the standard of living in New York City in 1909. Dr. Chapin's families consisted of father and mother and two to four children below working age. For such a family it was found that "with an income of between $700 and $800 a family can barely support itself, provided that it is subject to no extraordinary expenditures by reason of sickness, death or other untoward circumstances. Such a family can live without charitable assistance through exceptional management and in the absence of emergencies."* Thus the 96 West Side families with an average income of $705.12, fall by a narrow margin within the class which, according to Dr. Chapin's carefully worked out standards, can barely support itself. It is obvious that in these families there could be no question about the mother's working. She could not afford not to work.

The group of 67 families in which both parents and one or more children were earning, had an average yearly income of $1,112.28. But these families were noticeably larger than those of the preceding groups. The average size of the family, as seen in Table 25, was

* Chapin, Robert Coit: The Standard of Living Among Workingmen's Families in New York City, p. 279. Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Charities Publication Committee, 1909.

6.48 persons. Two-thirds of them had four or more children. Thus, while the combined earnings were more than eleven hundred dollars, an over-large family reduced the average per capita income to $171.65 a year, or $3.30 a week. Referring again to the Chapin report we find that for a family of husband, wife, and three children in New York, "$900 or over probably permits the maintenance of a normal standard, at least so far as the physical man is concerned."* Hence, in these large families with father, mother, and one or more children at work, an income is achieved which provides something less than the normal standard of comfort defined by Chapin. Again, it is obvious that the mother in these families cannot forego working for wages. However, she need not work so much, or, as she says, "so hard." She is happy if she can find a little berth as janitress, though the returns from this work are very small.

It is the peculiar misfortune of these over-large families that they so often contain a loafer. Scarcely have all the children grown up and gone to work, when one of them sees in the new prosperity of the family his chance to live by the labor of others. He is what the psychologist would call an "infantile personality," which, under any given set of conditions, will always choose the easiest way to exist. He is the foe of healthy co-operation in the family and in society. On the West Side he is usually one of the older sons who preys on the earnings of his younger brothers and sisters and thus lowers the shares of all. Perhaps he is his mother's favorite—for partisanship tends to run high in large families—and she tries to shield him from the justice which his brothers and sisters would be ready to mete out to him. Some

* Chapin, op. cit., p. 246.

of the most cruel family tragedies were those of younger sisters and brothers thus victimized.

Such scattering resources as the families possessed, aside from the earnings of its members, are grouped in the table under income from other sources. These amounts included money from lodgers and boarders, pensions from charitable societies, child-helping agencies and churches, and help from relatives. The average income from such sources was largest in families where the mother was the sole wage-earner, and averaged $46.80 a year. It fell to $29.12 where both mother and children worked, to $9.88 when father and mother worked, and to $3.12 where father, mother, and children were employed. To analyze the sources of these subsidiary amounts a little more closely: In 42 families the money came from boarders or lodgers; in 14, from charitable and child-helping societies or churches; and in seven, from relatives or friends.

There were no cases of serious congestion due to the presence of boarders in the flat. The only badly congested households were those of the large families. It is apparent that women who work away from home so many hours of the day have all they can do to cook and clean for their immediate families, not to speak of extra persons. This automatically limits their ability to take boarders and lodgers as a secondary occupation.

Of the 42 women who had boarders or lodgers, 23 were widows. In the majority of these cases, the extra person in the household was a near relative and friend who was disposed to require as little attendance as possible, or sometimes even shared the brunt of the household work. Indeed, some of the lodgers were gallant helpers of the overburdened woman with whom they

lived. There were staunch friends masquerading as lodgers. There was Mrs. Williamson's absentee lodger, for instance, who paid $10 a month. He was a sailor, as Williamson had been in his lifetime and as Mrs. Williamson's father also had been. After Williamson's death, his friend paid continuously for "trunk room" in Mrs. Williamson's flat, although he came into port only at long intervals. This arrangement allowed Mrs. Williamson to remain in her sunny Tenth Avenue apartment instead of retiring to a dingy rear tenement.

Another such friend was Blanche Cavor, who first worked side by side with little Mrs. Stroebe in the candy factory and afterward went to lodge with her. When Mrs. Stroebe's health failed and she went to the hospital, her lodger did all the housework in her absence, took the little one to the day nursery every day and cared for her at night. Mrs. Stroebe, lying in her hospital bed and struggling with an ominous cough, said of her, "Blanche is a good girl, even if her eyes *are* as small as pin heads. I'm going to make her a nice present when I get well."

It must be noted that the 14 families who had been receiving aid from charitable sources had been receiving it more or less regularly. This number does not include the families who may have had emergency relief during the year, or those whose children had received personal care and attention from charitable sources. The 14 families enumerated were regular pensioners. In addition, there were families who had had emergency relief during the year from the Charity Organization Society, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, and local charitable agencies. But these sources of income were too scattering to be completely ascertained.

In general, however, it was found that of the 370 families, 139, or 38 per cent, were wholly unknown in the relief records. That the proportion of self-supporting families was so large a one is due, of course, to the fact that the mothers, possessed of unusual courage and determination, had stood between their families and destitution. The exceptional character of the women also accounts for the excellent family morale which characterized so large a proportion of the homes of this group.

EXPENDITURES FOR RENT, INSURANCE, AND CARE OF CHILDREN

Those who pay their bills with a check book can scarcely realize how important the frequency or infrequency of pay day is for those who are earning a bare subsistence. Whether wages are paid once a month, twice a month, or every week is a serious consideration aside from the actual amount of the wages.

The fact that rent is invariably paid in advance and wages not, is seldom complained of by working people. As long as they have the money they like to pay the rent in advance. Then if work stops unexpectedly, the family is sure of shelter for a time at least. When Farley suddenly lost his job in the middle of the winter, Mrs. Farley's first comment was "Thank God, we've got the rent paid two months in advance."

Wages, as a rule, are paid every week, while rents on the West Side are paid once a month. In a few recently erected West Side tenements the plan of collecting rents by the week has been introduced. The custom, a convenient one in that it establishes a correspondence of period between income and outgo, finds favor with tenants. Also, in many of the houses where

monthly payment is the rule, the manager has been obliged to yield to a kind of instalment system by which payments are made irregularly during the month. The very poorest families cannot pay their rent in a lump sum. Once a week they "pay in what they can" until in the course of the month the full sum has been paid.

In some instances, notably hotel service, the archaic custom of paying wages once a month still survives. This does very well after the woman is once launched in the occupation, but it sometimes makes the penniless weeks of waiting at first an insuperable obstacle between herself and a steady job. She falls back on day's work where the earnings if irregular are at least immediate.

Just how serious a matter this delay in wage payments may become is illustrated by Mrs. McCurdy's story of how she and others began work as car cleaners in one of the car yards nearby. The wages were $35 a month, paid once every two weeks. But since it is the rule of the railroad company to keep all employes two weeks behind in their pay, the beginning scrubwoman must wait a month for her first wages. When Mrs. McCurdy got the job, the Charity Organization Society, which had already been helping her, "staked" her for the first month, as she said, and thus saw her through. "But," said Mrs. McCurdy, "not many of the women can stick it out so long. Just the other day a woman told me she wanted to stay with the job, but she'd have to quit it because she couldn't wait a month for pay day. I told her to try to borrow somewheres. But she says, 'For God's sake, where could I borrow that much?'"

There is a current belief that the American workingman turns his wages over to his wife on Saturday night

and allows her to apportion all expenditures. This custom is perhaps more prevalent in America than in European countries, but it is by no means universal if the habits of West Side workingmen may be considered as examples. There is little regularity of practice regarding what they contribute to the family. On the other hand, the contributions of the children are usually standardized. How much they keep for themselves, how much they give in, is made a matter of rule and custom. There were many instances to show that what the wife gets from the husband's wages and what he keeps for himself depends on the personal adjustment between them and not on a recognized rule.

A carpenter who earned $20 a week regularly, gave his wife $10 and kept $10 for his personal wants. Out of her share she was to pay the rent and provide for a family of five children. A friend of the family undertook to remonstrate with him, but he insisted that her allowance was sufficient, for most of his neighbors' wives were compelled to do with less, as their husbands did not earn more than $10 a week. Again, there was Mr. Ryan who gave his wife $5.00 on Saturday night, and when she said "Is that all?" put the $5.00 back into his pocket. A stern disciplinarian was Mr. Ryan. A woman who had been married fifteen years declared that she had never known her husband's exact wages. Another, married ten years, said the same. In one family the father had steady work at $14 a week, but he often spent as much as $4.00 of this on tobacco and drink. His wife cheerfully allowed this amount, saying that he worked in the refrigerator room of a packing house and that he needed stimulants to keep him warm.

In Table 27 the relation of the average yearly rent

and the average yearly earnings of the mother to the average yearly income in the different types of families is to be seen.

TABLE 27.—RELATION OF AVERAGE YEARLY RENT AND AVERAGE YEARLY EARNINGS OF MOTHER TO TOTAL AVERAGE YEARLY INCOME, IN THE FAMILIES OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ACCORDING TO MEMBERS OF FAMILY AT WORK

Members of family at work	Families with specified members at work	Average yearly income of family	Average yearly rent		Average yearly earnings of mother	
			Amount	Per cent of income	Amount	Per cent of income
Mother only at work	101	$393.64	$115.96	29.5	$346.84	88.1
Mother and children at work . .	106	773.76	146.64	19.0	294.32	38.0
Mother and father at work . .	96	705.12	146.12	20.7	218.92	31.0
Mother, father, and children at work .	67	1,112.28	164.84	14.8	209.56	18.8
Total . .	370	$713.49	$141.43	19.8	$273.74	38.4

The women seemed to trace a direct connection between their earnings and the payment of rent. Throughout the district, there is a strong tendency for the wife to assume the responsibility for this item of the family budget. Certainly the mother's interests are most closely bound up in the preservation of shelter and warmth. In smaller towns, wives whose husbands earn scarcely more than the wage of the West Side workman may save and "skimp along" until they eventually succeed in "owning a home." For the tene-

ment mother of the city, this is impossible. A janitress' place with free rent is the nearest approach to "owning a home" that her own exertions can ever bring her. But not all of them can be janitresses. Most of them must earn money to pay rent instead of exchanging labor directly for house-room and shelter.

The above table shows that the rent item consumed nearly 30 per cent of the incomes of women who were the sole support of their families, 19 per cent of the incomes of those with mother and children at work, 21 per cent of the incomes of those with mother and father at work, and 15 per cent of those with father, mother, and children at work.

The rent paid by the widows and other women who were the only wage-earners in their families, averaged $115.96 a year, or $9.66 a month. Generally speaking, this represents the minimum which must be paid for rent on the West Side. Seven dollars to $8.50 were paid for two and three-room apartments in rear tenements. Two women were living in basement apartments for which they paid $7.00 a month. Removal from a rear tenement house to a front tenement house means a decided step upward in the West Side world. When Mrs. Grubinsky moved from the rear house to the front, she was at last gratifying the ambition of years. And Mrs. Berger was only waiting for her oldest girl to go to work when she should move into the front house.

In disbursing the income, the rent is the first expense to be met. As one woman said, "Many's the time we've gone to bed without supper, and with money in that yellow bowl on the shelf for the rent. Whatever you do, you don't want to be turned out on the street." After the rent, the mother's next care is the life in-

surance payments. The insurance is simply intended to cover burial expenses. The payments are made weekly and amount to 5 or 10 cents on each of the children, and occasionally to as much as 25 cents for adults. This is an expense that is kept up until resources are at their last gasp. One family lived for weeks on bread and tea, meeting the insurance dues every week.

We might expect unusual expenses in this particular group of families owing to the mother's absence from home. She might pay someone to help her with the work. But such was not the case. She did her own housework mornings and evenings and on Sundays. The only additional expense that was incurred on account of her going out was the cost of caring for the younger children. The day nursery fee—where a fee is charged—amounts to 5 cents a day. But some day nurseries of the district make no charge. The fee, of course, does not cover the cost of caring for the child in the nursery and is regarded as only a nominal fee by those providing the nurseries. However, it is well to remember that to the woman who is keeping two children in a nursery at a cost of 60 cents a week and who is earning for the same time only $6.00, the sum is by no means a nominal one.

But the cost of "minders" was much more than the cost of day nurseries. From $1.50 to $2.00 a week was the price paid to a neighbor for caring for a child during the mother's absence. Then the mother was also expected to supply the "findings," by which is meant the little one's milk and other food. It is at once apparent that this expense is considerable in proportion to the low incomes we have already scheduled.

In 15 homes out of 370, housekeepers were found.

At first glance it appeared that these mothers had delegated their household duties to others. But it invariably developed that there were young children in the family and the housekeeper's real function was that of a nurse for these children. She was in most of the cases an elderly person who gave her services for her "keep." Mrs. Shea's housekeeper described her functions thus: "You see, Mrs. Shea is forelady in the laundry. She writes down the names of all the girls and keeps track of them. She is a great scholar. And she don't have to worry about Willie, because I'm here to have an eye on him and holler at him when he needs it."

Even where the child was left with relatives during the day, the mother was accustomed to pay something, though perhaps less than the customary price. Only among the Italians, who exhibit such remarkable community of interest in their way of living, is it common for a neighbor to care for a child without remuneration. This is one of the ways in which, as the social worker on the West Side says, the Italians "will take care of their own." But the native West Side woman expects to pay for what is done for her and to be paid for what she does. As women working in factories cannot get away on overtime nights to fetch their children from the day nursery at the closing hour, they usually engage some school girl or boy in the neighborhood to do this service, paying 10 or 15 cents a week. This is one of the numerous ways in which West Side boys and girls earn money after school hours.

It is apparent that when these women workers have children below school age, the expense of securing care for them becomes a necessity and the women must strain their incomes to meet it.

CHAPTER VI

HOME LIFE

WITH rare exceptions the women were "keeping up a home." To live in a furnished room is generally regarded on the West Side as reprehensible in a married woman. It is condemned not only as expensive and improvident but also as a hand-to-mouth practice which indicates a tendency to shirk housekeeping and home-making duties. The women who are doggedly engaged in "keeping up a home" for their children by doing the housework and earning the money to support it, take great credit to themselves for their efforts, and well they may.

In many instances two broken families had combined to form a single household. In one case three generations of broken families were living together. The grandmother, aged sixty-five, was virtually separated from her husband because of the nature of his job at the piano factory only a few blocks away. He worked as porter during the day and was engaged to sleep on the premises at night. Her daughter, a widow of forty-five, had a son of fifteen, just beginning to work. Her granddaughter was a deserted wife of twenty-two, with a little daughter of six. The old grandmother kept house while the other two women worked, the one in a factory and the other in a theater. Four generations regularly gathered around the supper table.

The typical flat consists of three or four rooms—a

sitting room, a combination kitchen and dining room, and one or two bedrooms. Seldom is more than one room well lighted. Space is at a premium. Folding wire cots, chiffoniers, and drop-leaf tables are popular articles of furniture as they economize space. A sewing machine, bought on the instalment plan, is seldom missing. The "grandest" piece of furniture in the flat was perhaps secured with green trading stamps, as the housewife will tell you at the first opportunity. The collection of trading stamps is regarded as a practice of great thrift, and the parlor lamp thus secured is enjoyed not only for its own sake but also as evidence of the chief housewifely virtue. Occasionally, a prize piece, like Mrs. Keifer's mission clock, is secured in a puzzle contest of the *Journal*. In one of the poorest homes I came upon a shining new upright piano. Its presence was proudly explained as the result of little Annie's "cuteness" in making up more words than anybody else out of the letters in the manufacturer's name.

Closets are unknown. When the mother comes home from work she hangs her dusty little black hat on the gas jet or deposits it on the mantel. Unless she can afford to buy a wardrobe the children's clothes must hang on the chairs. Where to put away freshly ironed clothes is a serious problem. Some of the mothers meet this difficulty by leaving the most precious garments unironed until they are about to be worn. The little white dresses for Sunday are washed out and starched early in the week and then stowed away in a small bundle until Saturday or even Sunday morning, when they are ironed while the family waits, so to speak.

The kitchen, as well as the bedroom, is without stor-

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
LIBRARY

A Summer Afternoon in Mayer's Place

age capacity; a shallow cupboard is built against the wall, but pantries are unknown. Food is bought from day to day, as the average income is so low that supplies could not be bought in quantities; hence the need of a pantry is not so great. The cupboard, with the dishes set forth on shelves decorated with bright oilcloth or gay scalloped paper, is likely to be the most attractive and orderly feature of the house. It is out of the children's reach, and various things besides dishes,—the keys of the house where the mother scrubs, rent receipts, insurance books, pawn tickets, all the little objects so sadly significant of their hard-pressed lives,—are stowed away there for safekeeping.

On Saturday afternoon a little girl came dashing into an apartment where her mother was scrubbing. It was the end of her brother's first week of work at his first job after getting his working papers, and the news which his sister had run three blocks to bring was, "Frank has brought home his *salary* and has put it in the cupboard under the glass sugar bowl!"

The space under the stationary tubs is used for storing kindling. Certain warehouses and stores in the neighborhood make a practice of giving away empty packing cases on certain days of the week, especially on Saturday morning. The cases are dragged home by the children or the mother and split up on the sidewalk. The axe stands in the corner of the kitchen, or perhaps, if it is a very good one, it is placed in the corner of the sitting room as a safer place than the kitchen. The entire supply of coal is kept in a tow-sack or a box in the kitchen. Even in the coldest weather a fire is made in the kitchen stove only mornings and evenings. If any of the family stay at home from school or work on the

coldest days they may lie in bed to keep warm; it is cheaper than burning coal.

Housekeeping in these cramped quarters is exceedingly difficult. Such a home absorbs an endless amount of labor without making much return in the way of tidy appearance; the housekeeper can overcome the dirt more successfully than the disorder. "It looks as if the place was upside down," they would sometimes say, "but it's clean, anyway." Washday, especially, reduces the home to chaos. The bed is left unmade while the only pair of sheets is being washed and dried; the clothes are boiled on the kitchen stove, filling the apartment with steam; from the open wash tubs, zinc or stationary, rises soapy vapor. All sorts of discomforts and inconveniences must be endured until the clothes are on the line. A small laundry, just struggling into existence on Tenth Avenue, announced very low prices beneath a sign which read, "Does it pay to upset your home on Mondays?" The legend must have made a strong appeal to hundreds of women who passed the window and read it. However, the cost of laundry work, even at the lowest prices, is prohibitive for families living at even a higher economic level than those visited in the course of this investigation.

While the women are doing less and less cooking and sewing in their own homes, they seem to be doing more and more laundry work. One mother of two immaculately clean little daughters was asked how she managed to do it. "I wash and iron every day," she replied. The women who work away from home all day usually spend at least three or four evenings of the week washing and ironing. The clothes are hung over the stove to dry over night, or put on the wash lines at-

tached to the window. A settlement worker who went to live in the neighborhood was much puzzled by the sound of squeaking pulleys late at night until she learned that clothes were then being hung out to dry. Some of the tenement houses of the better type put up wash lines on the roof and do not allow them to be attached to the windows. This arrangement is not popular with the women, however, because clothes drying on the roof must be watched to prevent theft,—an arrangement which necessitates the housekeeper's absence from her apartment for inconvenient intervals.

A philanthropic institute maintains a laundry for the use of the neighborhood women. They are allowed to bring the family wash, do all the work there, and take the clothes home ready to wear. About six women can be accommodated and the place is always used to the limit of its capacity. It is kept open evenings for those who work during the day. One woman had been going there regularly for four years, just "to keep the mess out of her house," as she said. The companionship of the other women is an added attraction. There are German women in the district who have not forgotten how they used to go down to the river bank in their own country and work together in large cheerful companies. It was a pleasant custom, although it was terribly hard work. The tenement kitchen with all its imperfections is a great improvement on the river bank for laundry purposes.

As has been said, cooking and sewing in the homes are on the decrease. Prepared foods are stacked high on the shelves of the small, dingy grocery stores where these women spend their wages. More and more the housewife buys these foods. They save time and fuel,

—and fuel is a heavy item. Only occasional survivals of old-fashioned methods of preparing food were met. For instance, a hardworking theater cleaner was found in her kitchen using her entire matinee furlough of three hours to pickle a hare in the primitive German fashion for her children's Sunday dinner. We have seen that on the further West Side there are families who manage to piece out an uncertain income by the use of the kind of "waste" peculiar to the neighborhood. The children pick up wood and coal. On Fridays, when the brewery throws out a quantity of ice, they are on hand and drag away great chunks by means of a piece of twine. Similarly they haunt the produce depots on Eleventh Avenue for refuse fruit and vegetables.

Sewing is almost an unknown art among the middle-aged women of the district. If there is any sewing done in the home, it is more likely to be the work of an older daughter who is able, by using Butterick patterns, to make her own shirtwaists and perhaps a dress for a younger sister. The presence of a sewing machine in the majority of the apartments is evidence of the machine agent's industry rather than of the amount of sewing done in the family. Ready-made garments are the rule. There is little push-cart trade in clothing in the district; but the Ninth and Tenth Avenue stores are kept open regularly at night and are especially busy on Saturday nights. The women buy the cheapest garments to be had,—children's dresses and rompers for 25 cents, muslin pantaloons for 9 cents, knitted shirts for 12½ cents, stockings for 10 cents, and so on. The goods are thin and sleazy, and fade promptly, but they make a brave appearance in the store, with their bright new colors and all finished to the last button and

buttonhole. As Mrs. Rooney said, displaying a pink flannellette dress for the baby, "Now, who would put them little things together when you can buy them for 19 cents?"

More assistance is received in the form of clothing, perhaps, than in any other way. Relatives in better circumstances may send a box of "left-overs"; a friend or employer donates an outworn garment; the settlements and relief societies distribute clothing; the school gives away garments. A woman who is too proud to accept money or food will willingly accept a gift of clothing. Mrs. Reilly, walking out in a tailor-made suit which was worn last year by the well-to-do woman for whom she washed, would give you no hint of the tea and bread diet on which she and the children might be subsisting—which was exactly what Mrs. Reilly wished.

Small and cramped as these tenement homes are for the uses of daily living, they are even more deficient when the use expands into a ceremony. There comes one day to every family an event which transforms the home into a temple of joy or a temple of sorrow. One day in November the Rudiger flat was the scene of a funeral. The shutters of the little sitting room were closed, though needlessly, against the sunshine. Rows of candles were lighted at the head and foot of the casket, but the tallest candle remained unlighted for fear it might ignite the ceiling. The mother whom the Rudiger children had lost had been a tall woman, and the casket seemed huge within the narrow walls of the small sitting room. The place looked pitifully small and sordid in the presence of death, but after all it was far better adapted to its present use than to be the home of a young and growing family.

The Grubinsky home is identical in size with that of the Rudigers. Every Christmas it is invaded by a great Christmas tree which Mrs. Grubinsky buys late on Christmas Eve for 25 cents. Sometimes she waits as late as 11 o'clock to go for it, for like many of the West Side mothers she "plays the market" in her own way. The tree is set up in the sitting room where it reaches to the ceiling and obscures the only two outside windows the flat affords. But there it always stands during two weeks of the Christmas season, occupying the only table the family possesses, crowding Mr. Grubinsky and his pipe out of their favorite corner in the evening, disorganizing Mrs. Grubinsky's housekeeping. But nobody grumbles, least of all the little Grubinskys, who go to bed at night on a shake-down under the green and tinsel branches.

One often hears it said both in this country and abroad, that when the mother works away from home her earnings are swallowed up by the extra waste and expense occasioned by her daily absence from the helm. This statement was made the subject of a careful study in the city of Munich, Germany. The results, based on an intensive study of family budgets, throw some light on conditions in corresponding West Side families as the writer has observed them. Unfortunately, it was not possible to confirm these observations by a detailed budget study similar to Miss Otto's thorough inquiry.

"It is commonly asserted," runs the conclusion of this report, "that the small wage does not pay, and the loss of it would play no great part in the life of the family. The wage does play a rôle because it is added to an income which does not nearly suffice for the satisfaction of the family's necessities. The size of the

deficits disproved the assertion that the women could accomplish as much by thrifty housekeeping as by increasing the family income with their own earnings. On a merely pecuniary basis, this was seen to be impossible. In addition, the investigation of the housekeeping of working class families showed that the domestic arrangements of families with mothers at work did not differ materially from those where the mother was unemployed. Lowering the cost of food in families without a maternal wage-earner was only accomplished by lowering the quantity of food without making up the loss by the substitution of more nutritious values. Contrary to the general assumption that the women who do not work secure with the same expenditure a relatively better nourishment, it was shown that the same kind and amount of foodstuffs were used in both types of families. . . .

"The reason for the uniformity of housekeeping methods which otherwise prevailed was to be sought in the industry of the women themselves, who in addition to their factory work kept the housework going. The limited means of these families fixes a narrow range in kinds of food and the different ways of preparing them. The factory mother does not say, 'What is the quickest?' but, like the woman who spends her whole day on her housework, she asks, 'What costs the least?' This alone conditions the kind and quantity of the materials bought and allows little room for experiments in the art of cooking and the improvement of food. In addition to their limited choice, there is, among all these women, a lack of domestic training and ignorance of the different values in foods which renders impossible the better employment of the small sums available for purchases.

As a final cause to be mentioned is the fact that people hold fast to their old habits of food; and as the budget does not permit any increase in the cost of meals, only the industry of the women can bring it to pass that meals continue in the normal groove. . . .

"By a cruel overburdening of the woman who must do the work of two, it happens that her earnings are not swallowed up either directly or indirectly by increased expenditures at home. A definite surplus remains. This is the answer to the doubt concerning the financial returns from the factory work of women. Whether this is regarded as a real gain depends upon the economic standing of the individual family, who might be compelled to pay for any lowering of their already scanty income with a further lowering of the standard of living and with physical and cultural decay." *

Families are large on the West Side. It is not uncommon to find six children or more in a flat.† But the families of mothers who work are more likely to be below the average size than above it. The more young children a woman has, the more difficult it becomes for her to leave her home and earn outside. Thus her wage-earning activities are automatically limited by the same fact that sometimes makes her need to earn the more acute; that is, by the number of her children.

In the 370 families visited the total number of living children was 1,321, an average of 3.57 per family. Excluding those who were married and a few who had "gone their own ways," there were left in these 370

* Otto, Rose: Über Fabrikarbeit Verheirateter Frauen, p. 288 ff. Münchener Volkswissenchaftliche Studien. Cottasche Buchhandlung, 1910.

† See True, Ruth S.: The Neglected Girl. (West Side Studies.)

families, 1,232 children, averaging 3.33 per family, whose status is represented in Table 28.

TABLE 28.—STATUS OF 1,232 LIVING CHILDREN OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Status	Children		Mothers with children as specified
	Number	Per cent	
At home and below school age:			
In day nurseries . . .	40	3.2	31
Others	181	14.7	120
At home and attending school:			
In kindergartens . . .	58	4.7	54
In grades	584	47.4	296
At home and at work . .	283	23.0	170
Total at home . . .	1,146	93.0	370[a]
Away from home:			
In institutions . . .	45	3.7	27
With relatives . . .	41	3.3	35
Total away from home .	86	7.0	57
Grand total	1,232	100.0	370[a]

[a] The total number of mothers. As some children were listed in more than one classification, the sum of the numbers in the last column exceeds the total number of mothers.

Three-fourths of the children were at school or at work. These are the children who suffer least from the mother's employment outside of the home. The school takes care of them from 9 a. m. till 3 p. m. Some of the local schools have a noonday lunch, so that it is not necessary for the pupils to go home at mid-day. There are afternoon classes at the children's aid schools; and some social agencies, including the libraries, have a

story-telling hour in the late afternoon. On Saturday morning a number of sewing schools in churches and settlements are in full blast. Although comparatively few children come under the steady influence of these child-helping enterprises, they are nevertheless a resource for the mother who must earn and who dreads the influence of the street on her children in her absence. There was Nellie Flittner, for instance, who received a gold medal from one of the church sewing schools because she had not been absent from her Saturday morning class for seven years. Her mother was employed in a hotel, working seven days a week.

Eighteen per cent of the children, 221, were below school age. Only 40 of these children were cared for in day nurseries, leaving 181 who were looked after by relatives or neighbors in a haphazard fashion. Only two day nurseries, accommodating but 120 children between them, were found in this district. The women regard the day nursery as a type of institution, and as such, distrust it. It must be said that the attitude of the management too often shows the strain of autocracy with which we are prone to dilute our charity. At one nursery, the hotheaded Irish mothers were always getting their baby carriages mixed and then squabbling over them. Righteously indignant, the management finally forbade them to leave their go-carts at the nursery any longer. This severe ruling made it necessary for the mother either to carry a heavy child to the nursery in her arms or to let him walk too far on his unsteady legs, for it was impossible for her to return the go-cart to her home and get to work on time.

Prejudice against the methods of caring for their children was not common among the mothers. But some

Factory Workers Leaving the Day Nursery with Their Children

made very intelligent and just criticisms, and there were several who might very well have served on the visiting committee of the nursery. These were women who had been long in domestic service before their marriage and were well trained in the care of children. However, ignorant mothers were occasionally met with. "Do you think, dearie, the baths they give the children in them places makes 'em sick?" they would anxiously inquire.

Only 45 children, or 3.7 per cent, were in institutions. That so small a number of the children had been "put away" is mainly due to the ever lively and active prejudice against institutions on the mother's part. This prejudice, combined with fear and suspicion, furnished indeed the chief spur to their efforts. What were they working for if not to keep the home together?

Most of those who had put their children away were widows with more children than they could possibly support. They had kept at home the younger children, spreading a small income out thin to make it nourish as many as possible, and had put the older ones in institutions. At fourteen, these little hostages return to their homes, and are required to take up duties and responsibilities from which their institutional life has carefully trained them away. Fresh from an environment which has deprived him of even a normal sense of property,—often the institution child doesn't know how to handle money or count change,—he is thrust into industry and wage-earning. The little autocratic world he has left did not train him in responsibility, but now he must suddenly assume it. His mother, who has looked forward to his homecoming and his pay envelope as a relief to her burdens of work

and responsibility, often finds that she has leaned on a broken reed. "I was hopin' when he come home we'd have it a little easier," she says bitterly. "But he's no good to me."

Almost as many children, 41, or 3.3 per cent, were being cared for by relatives as by institutions. An aunt is a very near relative on the West Side. She takes it for granted that she should help out where her sister's children are in distress. "My aunt brought me up," "My aunt kept a candy store and I helped," "My aunt took us home after my mother died,"—these are common introductions to the life stories of West Side working girls. Often the aunt is blamed by her foster children, as the stepmother is blamed, for hard conditions which she cannot help, because tradition has taught them to pick flaws in her. As a matter of fact, she herself is often a hardpressed mother who has trouble making room for the new member of her family, but does not question that it is her duty to do so.

The 370 mothers had borne altogether 1,758 children, an average of 4.75 children per family. They reported 437 deceased children, an average of 1.18 per family, or 25 per cent of all the children born.

The mother's task of child-rearing is no easy one. Each new baby means illness, expense, and further strain on the small family income.* Consequently abortions are common, and unsuccessful attempts are even commoner. Patent medicine vendors and certain classes of doctors and midwives carry on an illicit business in the district. A practice which the women know to be so common they can scarcely regard as immoral;

* See following chapter, The Physical Cost, p. 159.

and, in any case, they feel that it is justified by their necessities.

They are strangely apathetic toward the loss of their children by death. Almost as soon as the first pang of sorrow is past, the bereaved mother is ready to say that the little one "is better off" and to speak of death as a merciful release from a life of hardships. One never hears from them the mourning cry of the mother in happier circumstances, "So much love and pain and all for nothing."

It is only because life has not taught her her own responsibility toward the birth and death of her children that she is lacking in wholesome joy in the one and wholesome rebellion against the other. The same mother who resents the coming of children and resigns them so apathetically to death, will toil fourteen hours a day and seven days a week to keep up a home for the young lives in her charge. She meets her responsibilities with matchless heroism.

In our efforts to help her with her children, we sometimes overlook the fact that it is the mother who bears the brunt of many of our well-intentioned requirements. She is summoned to the school, to the juvenile court, to the clinic, to some one of the benevolent agencies by which we are trying to make better citizens of her sons and daughters. These apparently simple errands cost her a half or a whole day's work besides carfare and inevitable worry. If she utters a complaining word at the bureau we quickly remind her that the child "is hers, not ours," implying that she should be grateful for the help of our respective agency or bureau. As a matter of fact, we are not wholly consistent. In so far as we, as society, are interfering in the maternal responsi-

bility at all, to that extent the child is ours. More evening conferences and office hours ought to be arranged for working women who must otherwise make a heavy money sacrifice to take advantage of the free schools and free clinics that we offer her.

In the typical tenement flat of the district, home life and family life in the usual sense of the terms are impossible. The children play in the street, and even the home-keeping mother in her fifth-floor flat or rear tenement is too remote to exercise any real supervision. In the evenings when all the family have returned from work, the little flat is too crowded for comfort and quiet. The more studious children often take their books to the nearest settlement, church, or school for the evening study hour. Others, pretending to do the same, spend the evening on the streets. All members of the family tend to escape a congested flat which the best efforts of the mother cannot make homelike and inviting.

The women have little time for recreation or social life of any kind. They are too tired to go out in the evening or to attend the mothers' clubs at the social centers. Some of the German women belong to lodges, but more for the sake of the sick benefits and insurance than for the sake of the social features.

If Sunday is not a working day, they like to spend it at home. It is also the time for regular visits to relatives. But the Sunday excursion to the country, which is characteristic of the German and French working-class family, is very unusual in this neighborhood. In fact, it is not customary for husband and wife to go out in each other's company. The local recreational organizations seem to accept this segregation of the sexes as fundamental and proceed accordingly. Mothers'

meetings are diligently organized by social workers, but the father is left to go to the saloon.

The workingman, for his part, is quite as contemptuous toward the mothers' meetings as the average middle-class business man is toward the woman's club and other women's activities with which his wife is occupied. In a recent novel which deals with middle-class marriages in America, the author depicts a domestic scene in which the wife, returning from an afternoon at a musicale, is greeted by her husband with the question, "Have a good time?" This phrase, says the author, was the "formula which he used for almost every occupation pursued by women." *

This scene is easily paralleled in workingmen's homes on the West Side. When Mrs. Haggerty and Mrs. Ulrich put on their best clothes and went to the mothers' meeting at the kindergarten it was an event, for they had little time for pleasuring. But when they described the party to Mr. Haggerty, who was a longshoreman, and to Mr. Ulrich, who was a teamster, the men were openly scornful in their comments. "Didn't they just cod us, though!" said Mrs. Ulrich. Mrs. Haggerty, who was much of a philosopher in all matters where Haggerty was concerned, was not much affected by the ridicule, but she was not often moved to repeat the great efforts which were necessary to get away even occasionally to a mothers' meeting.

For mothers who must earn, there is indeed no leisure time problem. The long hours of earning are increased by the hours of domestic labor, until no slightest margin for relaxation or change of thought

* Herrick, Robert: Together, p. 246. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1909.

remains. The majority of our group were both industrious and self-respecting. They looked with disapproval on neighbors who loiter on the tenement stoop, "run in" for a visit at all hours, or spend entire afternoons in the moving picture shows. Most of the women were morally superior to such slack habits, even if their overworked lives had not prevented their succumbing to the indifference and inertia of the tenements.

None of the women expressed a direct preference for outside work over housework. But while the women had not chosen their way of life, they were not inclined to complain of it. Only in cases where the mother knew that her children were definitely suffering by her absence, was she moved to bitter protest. Otherwise the mother was disposed to accept the situation without complaint and even with more or less contentment. A few of the middle-aged women had discovered that a regular occupation is wholesome for the mind, and some expressed a preference for cleaning jobs because of their social character. "The work is hard," said one, "but we all pull together." And "It's rough work cleaning at the opera house," said another, "but every woman has just her own part to answer for, and the head cleaner is one of the best women that ever lived."

Sociability and companionship are things which no class can live without, and these women found in the companionship of their fellow workers some compensation for their days of drudgery.

CHAPTER VII

THE PHYSICAL COST

SICKNESS on the West Side is likely to be discussed in terms of cost. The illness of a wage-earner means the loss of so many days' or weeks' pay, and sometimes the permanent loss of a job. It means, besides, expenses for medicine and treatment. The mother may have a few dollars put by, and there may be other wage-earners who deprive themselves individually to relieve the new strain on the family budget. The family may pull through without an appeal to charity, but the cost of the experience is necessarily uppermost in everybody's thoughts. The period of illness is described as "such and such a number of weeks since he brought anything in." A visit to a doctor who didn't help matters any is reported as a money loss,—"That was a dollar thrown away." This constant, open anxiety about the cost is bound to be observed by the sick person. To an outsider it seems to crowd out all natural anxiety about the invalid's condition. It certainly shows what a strong element poverty is in producing mercenary behavior.

It is only the lack of opportunity which prevents cases like that of Mrs. Anna Ruhl, who managed to earn money by her affliction, from being more frequent. Mrs. Ruhl was almost blind. She suffered from an incessant tremor of the eyeballs, a disease known as nystagmus, as well as from other defects of vision.

With something like pride, Mrs. Ruhl would tell you that she had four separate diseases of the eyes! She had held a place as janitress for years, but had finally lost it through her failing eyesight. The "professor" at the clinic had told her that her eyes were incurable. When he asked her if she would sit for a series of lectures at his clinic, at $1.00 a sitting, Mrs. Ruhl eagerly accepted his offer. It was after she had gone through this experience, which netted her $15, that she made the most of what melancholy distinction there was in having four separate diseases of the eyes. The $15 went into the savings bank and helped to swell the savings of the Ruhl family to the amount of $60.

Among families as poor as many are on the West Side every asset must be converted into its cash value. Even the death of a new baby may be an economic resource for the mother. Her breast milk is worth ten to twelve dollars a month, if she brings home a nursing baby from the hospital.* It is not unusual for West Side women to earn money in this way when the tragical opportunity comes to them. The little boarder is tenderly cared for and the whole family soon forgets that he is a stranger. When the time comes for him to return to the hospital the money loss is the least part of his foster mother's grief.

Mrs. Decker's experience as a foster mother, for instance, extended over two years and brought her $228.

* According to the New York Charities Directory for 1912, published by the Charity Organization Society, the New York Foundling Hospital boards out about 1,650 babies, who are "cared for by nurses of the Out-Door Department at their own homes. These nurses are respectable poor women with families, who use the money paid them principally for payment of rent." Not all the children thus boarded out are nursing infants. Many of them are "walking children."

As long as the baby was breast fed, she received $10 a month, which was clear profit for her family. But during the last six months of the time, the child was given "table food" and milk had to be bought for him. At the same time, his board was reduced to $8.00 a month. Mrs. Decker was, on the whole, an excellent foster mother. She was a small, active woman of a cheerful, wholesome disposition. All during her married life she had gone out to work by the day. Her husband, who was a vegetable peddler, "sometimes came home with $2.00 in his pocket. More often it was 75 cents. Maybe he'd end the week oftener with $8.00 than anything else." While Mrs. Decker was expecting her fourth child, she went out as a charwoman at $1.50 a day. In wiping the dust from a door lintel, the step-ladder slipped from beneath her. She hung by her hands at first from the top of the door, and then, as nobody was near to assist her, dropped to the floor. The result of the accident was the premature birth of her baby, which lived but a few days. Mrs. Decker's mother, who was taking care of her, went at once to the hospital and brought home a week-old girl baby. Mrs. Decker wept bitterly when she had to return the child to the "home" two years later. Several years afterward she would declare that the loss of her own babies had been less of a grief to her than the surrender of little Nora to an unknown fate. "The babies was safe in their graves, anyhow. But anything might happen to Nora."

Unless the illness is an acute one, it is not customary to consult a doctor. For an ordinary indisposition or a chronic complaint it is more economical to go to a drug store and buy a medicine prescribed by an adver-

tisement or a friend. But proprietary medicines are not especially cheap, and the saving thus effected is sometimes illusory. Mrs. Trabold had long suffered from a chronic complaint, but she had never consulted a doctor. She never missed a day's work and was in the habit of treating her own case with a certain proprietary medicine which cost her 60 cents a week—as much as the weekly insurance bill for her entire family. At last, during a particularly severe attack, she went to a doctor and paid $1.00 for a consultation. She came away with a prescription which enabled her to buy the equivalent of her old remedy in another form which cost her exactly one-fourth as much. This particular physician had, through long experience in treating the cases of very poor people, come to consider the cost of the remedies prescribed. Another woman, who was supporting herself and her little girl on the six to seven dollars a week which she earned by washing and ironing, was suffering from an outbreak of eczema on the leg. The small box of ointment which she bought every week cost 50 cents, no inconsiderable deduction from her weekly income.

Among the older generation of German women on the West Side there still lingers much faith in old-fashioned homemade remedies. The herb doctor still lives there and dispenses his magical "teas" to a large clientèle. There are "old wives" in the tenements who make their own salves and distribute them among their friends and neighbors. Mrs. Muller's salve was especially famous. She made it of "some unsalted fat, the juice of a common onion, and the juice of a 'Meerzwiebel'* leaf." Two precious "Meerzwiebel" plants stood

* Sea-onion, or squill.

in the south window of Mrs. Muller's rear tenement flat, and were carefully nursed through the winter. The recipe was one which Mrs. Muller had herself brought from a peasant village in Baden forty years before.

But the women do not avoid the dispensaries and hospitals. They consult the herb doctor, the display in the drug store window, and the dispensary, quite impartially, trying first one thing and then another. They expect the doctor to help them on the first visit and the first bottle of medicine to work a cure. If this is not the case, they are loath to try again the same remedy. A new doctor or a new kind of medicine stimulates more easily the hope that springs eternal.

It is impossible to say how much these women suffer from minor ailments, like bad teeth and aching feet. At the age of forty or fifty many of them are almost toothless. To this is largely due the look of premature age which is worn by women of forty in the tenements. But that is not the worst result of neglect of the teeth. It means much suffering from aching jaws and ulcerations, and is often the cause of chronic indigestion. Incidentally, it excludes the women from occupations in which the standard of personal appearance is high. A young French woman who was looking for work as a waitress was refused a position because she had lost her upper teeth. She might have bought artificial teeth, but that would cost more money than she could save for some time. "I must have teet' to get work; but I must also have work to get teet'," the poor woman said.

Fortunately, the younger generation is faring better in this respect. The young working girl willingly spends part of her wages on her teeth, and takes much

pleasure in the gilded result. But it is not vanity alone which makes her willing to spend her wages in this way. One young woman had suffered for years from toothache and ulcerations before she discovered that this could be prevented if one had money enough to pay for dentistry. She had good health, and a regular occupation, and was able thereafter to keep her teeth in a healthy condition. But she could not get over the wonder of the discovery. "It was a great day when I found out that you didn't have to go on suffering like that," she would say reflectively.

Varicose veins and hernia are familiar complaints. Proceeding, as they do, from muscular overstrain, they are commonly found among unskilled manual workers of both sexes. Varicose veins in particular are terribly prevalent among the middle-aged women, who acquire this disease from long standing in the factory or at their own wash tubs. Once acquired, it is difficult to cure, for the working woman cannot afford to keep off her feet for long at a time; she bandages her "bad leg" as best she can and goes about her work just the same. Sometimes the trouble goes on for years, the woman accepting her affliction with fatalistic patience. Mrs. O'Brien, who was pantry girl in a large hotel, working sixty-three hours a week, had suffered for years from a chronic abscess on the leg. From time to time, when it was worse than usual, Mrs. O'Brien would say, "My leg has been going against me lately."

However, this passivity toward illness and suffering is gradually yielding to the influence of free clinics, free hospitals, and district nurses. More and more the women seek relief through an operation when that is possible. Indeed, "operation" is such a common word

to them that it has almost lost its terror. Hospitals, too, are not the objects of suspicion and prejudice on the West Side that they are in immigrant neighborhoods. A serious accident or a threatened illness usually means a call for the ambulance and removal straightway to the hospital.

When we consider the conditions in these homes, it is not surprising that the hospital ward is so often preferred. No privacy is possible for the sick-a-bed. Very often three or four members of the family sleep together. If one of the bedfellows falls ill, the healthy must turn in with the sick night after night or else go without sleep. When Mrs. McWade lay ill for two weeks with pneumonia, all three of her children clambered into the family bed with her every night. The room in which she lay was totally dark and unventilated except through the door opening into the kitchen. This type of sick room is the rule on the West Side; dark, airless, exposed to all the turmoil of congested family life. It certainly affords the invalid no aid in his battle with disease.

When the mother of the family "gives up and goes to bed" it usually means that she is seriously ill. She may be in a condition which urgently demands rest and medical attention, but with the habit of continuous exertion strongly fixed upon her, it requires the latter stages of an illness to confine her to her bed. "If I sat on a chair three hours," said Mrs. Michel, "my bones would ache." And Mrs. Renner, who passed through an attack of grippe without losing a day's work, had a cheerful theory that "you may feel bad when you first get up, but after you begin to work it passes off."

Another influence which induces the women to keep

up an appearance of health is the fear that they may lose their work through being thought delicate. When Mrs. Slade was engaged by the mistress of a Riverside Drive home to do the laundry work for a house, she was told that her predecessor had regularly used four days of the week. Mrs. Slade, who was hampered by a "bad leg," found it necessary to work overtime in order to get through in four days. She was fully content to do so and hoped the "Madam" would not discover that she stayed late. But the cook reported her, and the Madam came down to the basement to ask, "Are you sure you can do my work?" "I've done heavier washings than yours," replied Mrs. Slade indignantly. "Don't you need another day?" said the lady kindly. But Mrs. Slade, knowing that four days were standard in the house, declared that she needed no more. After this episode, she took pains to increase her speed so as to leave on time in the evening.

A great deal of the illness among the women springs from conditions of neglect and overwork, and proceeds from what may be called preventable causes. The three principal sources are child-bearing, domestic labor for their own families and others, and industrial conditions.

The bearing of children in the tenements is attended by conditions which increase its burdens and its dangers. One of the most serious burdens is the rapid recurrence of pregnancies. The number of pregnancies reported by six women of our group within certain periods of time were, respectively, 15 in nineteen years; 14 in twenty years; 10 in thirteen years; 10 in twelve years; seven in ten years; and six in nine years. The number of living children in each of

these cases, taken in order, was, respectively: five, nine (including a pair of twins), two, two, three, and two.

One would have to search long among middle-class wives of corresponding age to find the duplicate of these histories. The effect of a long series of ineffectual pregnancies on the mother is to undermine her strength and vigor, and, in the worst cases, to produce such complete organic exhaustion that it is impossible for her to bear a mature and fully developed infant. The children who do not succumb to premature birth, or to sheer immaturity following a normal birth, grow onward into a weakened childhood. It is never too late to pay the penalty of having entered the race of life with a poor equipment. This is especially true of children in the tenements where the standard of living is rarely sufficiently generous to redeem a handicap at birth.

Very few of the women have the advantage during confinement of skilled obstetrical treatment. Most of them are attended by midwives—a well represented occupation in this neighborhood. From the peasant regions of Europe the women have brought a strong tradition in favor of being attended in confinement by a woman. That this tradition has yielded so little to the American custom of calling in a physician is largely due to the cheapness of the midwife's services. She asks from five to ten dollars, but sometimes it is a long hard pull to get even this small amount paid. Needless to say, it is a debt which often goes unsettled.

The midwives of the West Side are nearly all German women. As a class they are not more intelligent than their neighbors; their only superiority is that which results from a few months' training and such knowledge as comes from practical experience. The regulation of

midwives in the city is extremely lax. The irresponsible and indifferent and even the criminal practitioners are by no means ruled out. The poor woman who has only five or seven dollars to pay for care during confinement is liable to fall into the hands of a clumsy learner or an ignorant bungler. Two of the women who were visited for this investigation, and died while it was in progress, were the victims of peritonitis due to neglect on the part of the attending midwife.

The sanitary conditions surrounding the woman's confinement at home are about the worst possible. The midwife herself comes from a home perhaps far from clean. Hurriedly summoned from her own housework, she brings to her task a pair of hands which need all the antiseptic scrubbing prescribed by the board of health rules.* But if she is not a person of cleanly habits, she does not appreciate the value of these rules and is apt to neglect them. The room occupied by her patient is of the kind already described,—dark, airless, hard to keep clean. Conditions like these become a test of the sick woman's vitality rather than an aid to her recovery. As one physician said in speaking of the health of one of his patients, "She is a woman with a great deal of resistance. She has gone through two attacks of fever in that house and recovered."

Some of the women avail themselves of the free out-practice of the hospitals. They register at the office, call there for preliminary examinations, and receive free medical attention at home when the time of their confinement arrives. They are less likely to go to a hospital for this than for other kinds of illness. The ar-

* Annual Report of the Department of Health of the City of New York, 1909. Rules for Midwives, p. 165 ff.

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A Danish Mother and Her Sons

rival of a new baby is looked on as being more or less in "the day's work" and few precautions are taken. It is one of the inconsistencies of the West Side woman that she stays at home for her confinement and receives such poor obstetrical care that she must afterward go to the hospital and be operated on for a laceration. Or she rises prematurely from her bed to do her own housework and acquires a uterine weakness which must later be remedied by an operation in the hospital.

In cases where a woman was suffering from overstrain, it was sometimes difficult to say whether the cause lay in the nature of her work at home or her occupation. All of these women had been engaged for years in arduous housework, doing the washing of a large family, carrying baskets of wet clothes to the roof to dry, moving and lifting furniture, scrubbing, scouring, and above all, standing continuously. The family wash is the heaviest kind of a strain. The washing of overalls and other work garments requires a great deal of strength. When everybody praises the smart appearance of the street cleaners in their white suits, who thinks of the wives of these men who must wash the coarse, heavy garments at least twice a week?

The conditions of domestic labor for wages are almost wholly ignored in our regulation of industry. The women who work out by the day belong to the class of unsupervised and unregulated labor. It is impossible to compare the relative dangers of their work with factory work, owing to the unstandardized conditions of the former. However, it is worthy of remark that almost every woman who was suffering from prolapse of the uterus ascribed it to some form of overexertion in domestic work. It was also true that most of the

miscarriages reported were the result of domestic labor rather than of factory labor. One explanation of this was that by far the largest group of the women, 70 per cent, were earning by domestic and personal service. One is bound to realize that the heavy tasks of house-cleaning in the spring, house opening in the fall, water carrying, rug beating, furniture shifting, and so forth, offer plenty of room for accidents and emergencies to which the pregnant woman should not be exposed.

But instances of diseases which were distinctly occupational were not wanting. Three of the women who worked in needle trades were handicapped by chronic gastritis, a common disease in these occupations. One woman who worked as a felt paster in a piano factory also suffered from this complaint. A laundry worker, after working three weeks as a shaker and standing every day from 7:30 a. m. until 9 or 10 p. m., had to spend the next three weeks in the hospital with a serious affection of the ankle. The laundry workers as a group seemed to suffer most from the effects of their occupation.

The problem of health among these women is, perhaps, a problem of poverty rather than of their industrial employment. The statement made in a recent study of the employment of married women in Birmingham that "poverty alone has such an evident pernicious influence on the health of the mother and her offspring that the influence of industrial employment is to a considerable extent masked," * is also applicable to this group of women. As we have seen, 70 per cent

* City of Birmingham, Health Department. Report on Industrial Employment of Married Women and Infantile Mortality, 1910, p. 20.

were engaged in some form of domestic and personal service. The nature of their work, then, was not so different from that of the hardworking but so-called unemployed mother and housewife. The conditions under which it was done, however, were very different. Compared with the conditions affecting the group of factory women, those affecting the charwoman and other domestic and personal service workers may be considered less exhausting. On the other hand, the most overburdened housewife is never called upon to scrub floors all night long, or even half the night. Doubtless we shall soon see the necessity of regulating the work of women in hotels and public buildings, so that the health and strength of these women as well as of factory workers may be protected from night work and excessive hours.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HUMAN SIDE

WITHOUT consideration of the human factor, our study of conditions would be incomplete. Thus far we have spoken principally of facts and conditions which were common to the group and have largely ignored those which were accidental and peculiar to the individual family and the individual mother. But the importance of character in modifying the influences of environment must be taken into account. Personal ambitions and disappointments, personal desires and weaknesses, personal shrewdness or slackness play their part in these narrow homes as they do in more spacious ones. Therefore, briefly as it must be done, the attempt is made in this chapter to introduce the reader to the personalities and homes of some of the mothers. The life story of any one of these working women might easily fill a volume and would certainly be a valuable biography. But we must restrict our presentation here to the space of a few paragraphs. We hope, however, that these may suffice to give the reader a glimpse beyond the economic elements and to make more real the flesh and blood underlying the facts upon which the statistical tables of the foregoing chapters have been built.

Mrs. Stallmeister's Working History

Mrs. Stallmeister is a widow and lives with her two children in a two-room flat on the third floor of a Tenth Avenue tenement. The common halls and stairs are covered with figured linoleum in good repair. They are regularly and thoroughly cleaned. The street door is kept closed and a fresh muslin curtain hangs over the glass. The house is quiet and almost solitary during the day, as nearly all the tenants are widows and unmarried women who go out to work. The children are at school or in the day nursery. About the only sound to be heard from the stairway is the ticking of many alarm clocks in the empty flats.

Mrs. Stallmeister's own tiny apartment is a model of cleanliness, although how she manages to keep it so, working as she does for very long hours in the laundry, is a mystery. A red cotton cloth covers the kitchen table, and blue spice boxes and canisters ranged on the cupboard shelves in the pleasant German fashion give this room an air of cheer and comfort worthy of its mistress's best traditions as a "Hausfrau."

Mrs. Stallmeister's husband, like herself, was born in New York on the West Side, of German parents. They attended the same parochial school, the girl until she was eleven and the boy until he was twelve. Stallmeister's father and brothers ran an express business in which he worked until he was twenty-three. The entire family then moved out to Michigan where the sons all worked in the copper mines. At the end of seven years the mother died, and the family "broke up." Stallmeister was just thirty at the time. He returned to New York and went to work as a hearse driver. A man of industrious and domestic habits, he was not long content to lead a bachelor life, but soon married and "set up" a home.

He was then earning $11 a week and Katherine Bauer had $400 in savings. There soon began for them a distressing

period of illness and death. The first baby died a week after its birth. Both of Katherine's parents and Stallmeister's father were buried, one after the other, from the Stallmeister home after lingering illnesses. Mrs. Stallmeister nursed all of them. Misfortunes came so thick and fast during her brief married life that they almost crowd every other recollection out of her memory of the time. She takes a sort of melancholy pride in the fact that "she and her husband between them buried 17 near relatives in ten years."

However, as long as her husband's health lasted, he kept at work with the same employer. After the union of hearse drivers was formed his wages rose to $14 a week. The $400 which his wife had brought into the marriage was not drawn upon, but had been doubled by what the couple had added to it, when Stallmeister came down with an attack of pneumonia from which he never recovered. He developed tuberculosis and was ill for two years before his death. His wife would not consent to have him go to a hospital, saying he had always "provided for them when he was well and deserved to stay with his family." She went out to work when she could and the invalid "minded" the two children, always carefully following the visiting nurse's directions for their protection. The $800 was soon gone and for several months before the husband's death the wife was aided by the charity organization society. The sum received from the society amounted to $105, which she repaid out of the $500 which her husband's life insurance policy yielded. But she had other debts as well and only $100 of the insurance money remained when all arrears had been met.

Katherine Stallmeister is about thirty-eight. She is a pale, tall, thin woman, with a pronounced stoop. She dresses the year round in neat calico gowns of an old-fashioned cut and wears about her shoulders in winter a small plaid shawl. There is, in fact, in her own appearance and in her home, a noticeable lack of the sort of tawdry finery which is so pitifully evident in the dress and in the homes of the people

of this section. These things show her power of resistance to the influences of West Forty-ninth Street where she was born and which she has practically never left. The same resistance is seen in the sturdy family morale which preserves church-going habits, the sense of obligations, loyalty to old friends, and simple hospitality. When a chance visitor drops in to see her in the evening after her long day in the laundry, Mrs. Stallmeister is never too tired to brew a cup of tea or too poor to afford it, nor are her housekeeping arrangements too unready. It is noticeable that the visitor is usually an old acquaintance—a schoolmate years ago at the Assumption School, or perhaps a fellow-worker, but seldom a fellow-tenant. Mrs. Stallmeister has strong prejudice against "taking up" with the latter—a prejudice not uncommon among the older settlers in the district.

Her energy is not the effect of very robust health. Early and constant employment have stunted her growth. As a child of eleven, she went to work packing candy in a large factory at $1.50 a week. Here she stayed a year. The next year she and her sister found work in a corset factory, inserting stays nine hours a day for $3.50 a week. But Katherine was ambitious and faithful, and at the age of twelve she was forelady, with six eyelet setters under her. Her earnings averaged $6.00 a week. From this time on her industrial progress was more than praiseworthy; her wages increased slowly but steadily as she advanced from factory to factory, with little loss of time between jobs, always anxious to better herself. Unfortunately, about this time she absolutely ceased to grow. For five years she added to her wages, but nothing to her height or weight. At the age of eighteen she weighed 89 pounds.

Meanwhile Katherine and her sister had gone on from the corset factory to a "jersey" factory. Their mother went with them when they applied, leading the two girls by the hand, for the master of the factory would not employ little girls on their own applications. Katherine was put at sewing

buttons on jerseys—144 buttons for 7 cents. Her hands flew; she worked ten hours a day; at the end of the week she would have between six and seven dollars. But she looked around for other worlds to conquer. The girls at the buttonhole machine earned more than she did. Katherine asked for a chance at the buttonhole machine, but the forelady refused, for Katherine was her most rapid button sewer. The little girl bided her time and when at last the forelady married, a year afterward, Katherine was at the buttonhole machine the next day. Even now, Mrs. Stallmeister tells this story with a thrill of triumph.

She sat over this machine three years; with it she could earn $10 a week, and sometimes more. At last the jersey factory went out of business, and the Bauer girls found employment in one of the new shirtwaist factories which were rapidly multiplying throughout the city. Katherine was made an operator on sleeves. But her sister got the coveted buttonhole machine, and Katherine finally left this place because her sister was earning more than she was. She entered a silk ribbon factory on the West Side and was soon making $10 a week as a weaver.

But her term in the factories now came to an end. At the age of nineteen she began to grow and at the same time to develop curvature of the spine. She was put into a plaster jacket and some relatives living in the country came to the rescue with an invitation for Katherine to visit them for six months. At the end of this time the jacket was removed and the mischief proved to have been arrested. But Katherine was afraid to go back into a factory. She got a position as nurse girl for the opportunity it afforded of being in the open air. She remained in domestic service of one kind and another until her marriage.

She has never been one to sit inactive in the presence of misfortune, or to fail to try a new plan whenever an old one has not succeeded. After her husband's death, she moved to the flat on Tenth Avenue, and thereby reduced her rent to

$7.50. She looked about for work. The character of the district had changed. The steam laundries had come in. The girls were working at the mangles for $6.00 a week. The starchers earned more, by the piece, but the work was terribly exhausting. She decided that she must learn fine ironing. But where does one learn a trade in New York? Especially where does a widow nearing forty, with two children dependent on her for support, learn a trade? It sounds difficult, but Mrs. Stallmeister was used to difficulties. She discovered that there were two commercial laundries in the city which undertake to teach beginners—one in an uptown district and one near Mrs. Stallmeister's home. She went to the nearest one. She paid the foreman a fee of $2.00 and worked for three weeks under one of the regular ironers. What she earned during those three weeks went to her teacher, and Mrs. Stallmeister, keeping track in her careful way of what this amounted to in the course of that time, estimates that it came to $18. Hence it cost her $20 to learn family and shirt ironing. This was expensive tutelage, but the uptown laundry would have charged $15 outright as a fee besides the three weeks' work, so that Mrs. Stallmeister considered she had "got off easy."

She began working regularly in one of the superior laundries of the district. In summer she averages $15 a week; when winter comes she receives less, but the average has been $12. There is a relationship of mutual respect between herself and her employer, and as long as she keeps her health she will probably keep her work. But she can not afford vacations or illnesses; she must always be up to the mark.

Mrs. Stallmeister has proved that she can earn. In spite of the handicaps of years, uncertain health, and children, she has demonstrated her ability as a worker and wage-earner. But what of the children meanwhile?

At first she put them in a day nursery, as they were both too young for school. She paid a neighbor $1.00 a week to fetch them home at 6 o'clock in the evening, for the nursery

made a point of closing on time, although the laundries do not. Sometimes she worked until 9 o'clock. The children could not be left alone evenings. She talked the matter over with the agent of the charity organization society who agreed with her that the present arrangements could not go on. The boy especially was delicate and needed fresh air. So the children were taken for the winter to a "home" in the country where for a fee adapted to the mother's income they are being cared for. Mrs. Stallmeister goes to see them once a week, and tells her acquaintances that the little ones are with "relations" in the country, for it wounds her pride that they should be in a "home." She looks on the plan as temporary and is restless under the separation. She means to have the children with her when summer comes in spite of her sixty hours at the laundry and the extra evenings' work.

A Home Where Nobody Sits Down

Mrs. Fuhrmann lives "across the tracks" in one of the desolate tenements peculiar to the Eleventh Avenue quarter. The halls and stairways by which we reach the fourth floor where Mrs. Fuhrmann's flat is located are bare of any attempt at covering. A couple of lads race past us making a terrific din all the way down. However, the board flooring is well washed and the musty smell which pervades the carpeted hallways in the better tenements to the east is missing here. The Fuhrmann apartment, when we reach it, presents the same meager, well-scoured appearance. The afternoon sunshine pours into the kitchen, and as the apartment has "rooms through," the ventilation is not of the worst. Notwithstanding cleanliness and sunshine, the kitchen looks shabby and uninviting. Two or three straight chairs stand about in casual positions; but it is apparently a home in which nobody ever sits down.

The rent is high—too high for Mrs. Fuhrmann's income. She earns $9.00 a week by working every day including Sunday. During the last year she did not fail her job a single

day out of the 365. Her earnings for the year, therefore, came to $468. Out of this, $144, or 31 per cent, went into the rent. When she moved into these quarters her oldest son was earning also and the rent was less of a tax on the family income, but her son has died since, leaving Mrs. Fuhrmann with the two younger children, a girl of eleven and a boy of seven, to occupy the four rooms, and the mother to meet the rent alone with her slender earnings. She does not make a change, partly because with the entire seven days of the week given over to drudgery, little time is left for house-hunting and even less courage for making changes. Another fact which holds her fast is that the children are favorites "on the block." Hattie, who is rosy and healthy, is a favorite with Mr. Schmidt, the grocer, who says she looks as if she "hadn't long been over," and jokingly doubts Mrs. Fuhrmann's statement that the child was born in Fortieth Street. Little Walter, who looks anæmic and pale beside his buxom sister, has also his patron on the block, a detective, who promises to make of Walter a detective too some day. The housekeeper of the tenement tells the children when to start to school, for Mrs. Fuhrmann must be at her work an hour before it is time for school to begin.

It is true that patience rather than enterprise is the chief trait in Mrs. Fuhrmann's character. She is about forty, a tall, lean, brown-eyed woman, with a very sad face which lights up now and then with an attractive smile. "The men at the theater call me funeral face," says Mrs. Fuhrmann, "but Nellie always speaks up for me and tells them they'd be funeral faces too if they'd been through what I have." She considers that she keeps pretty cheerful, however, through "having to work so hard." And this is doubtless true, although it is the passive cheerfulness of an uncomplaining drudge.

It is characteristic that Mrs. Fuhrmann has never had "but the two jobs in her lifetime." At fourteen she went to work in a shirt laundry and stayed there until she married seven

years later. The laundry itself changed management four times during this period and passed through a series of vicissitudes, none of which, however, were strong enough to dislodge the steady young collar starcher who went right ahead earning her twelve and fourteen dollars weekly.

At twenty-one she married. Her husband was a German cigar maker, who succeeded in supporting his family until his death eleven years later. They had 10 children, including two pairs of twins, but only three survived infancy. When Fuhrmann fell ill with tuberculosis, it became necessary for Mrs. Fuhrmann to look for work although she was then in the fourth month of her pregnancy. She found a place as scrubwoman in a large theater which employed six women to scour the premises—halls, floors, stairs and stage—on hands and knees. For seven days' work she was paid $7.00. On this she kept the family of four during her husband's last illness. After two months he died, and Mrs. Fuhrmann returned to work the day after the funeral. Her job was now more necessary than ever. She continued at it until the day before her baby was born. In her own words, she was "at work Saturday evening and Sunday the baby was there." This was her eighth confinement within ten years.

When the baby was one month old, she put him in the care of a neighbor, paying $1.50 a week for the service, and returned to her work, "thankful to get it again," as she says.

For eight years she has worked at this job. Her absence of a month when her baby was born, and two others, one of seven weeks and another of ten days, both due to sickness, are her only absences in the entire term of service. Her wages have been raised to $9.00 a week. There were a few years, after her eldest boy got his working papers, when his wages made things easier. But this son died at eighteen, and again Mrs. Fuhrmann became the sole wage-earner.

Mrs. Fuhrmann walks to and from her work, making two trips daily. She must be there at 8 o'clock in the morning and work until 1 o'clock. After walking home, she washes

and irons or scrubs her own floors until 4:30 p. m., when it is time to start for Broadway again. At 6:30 she leaves the theater for the day. On Sunday she is not required to return in the afternoon. When we consider the character of the job itself, the four trips daily between Eleventh Avenue and Broadway, the cooking, washing, and ironing at home, it is not surprising that the Fuhrmann home has the air of one in which nobody ever sits down.

A Wife Who Has Been in the Workhouse

The Bradys were both born in Ireland,—Patrick, forty-eight years ago and Catherine, thirty-three. Coming to New York in turn, they drifted to the West Side and have lived there twenty-five and fifteen years respectively. Twelve years ago they met and married. They have four daughters, the youngest of whom is now five months old. Regularly before the birth of each child, Mr. Brady has deserted, and as regularly, when the family crisis was past and Mrs. Brady once more supplied with a paying job, has he returned. He works occasionally as a driver, but what he earns he spends in the saloon. Occasionally he brings home a bag of groceries of his own selection, but he never gives his wife any money. He has been of almost no assistance to her in the support of their children, except, indeed, through his periodical disappearances which have indirectly helped her out; for, with Mr. Brady entirely out of the way, the charitable agencies were the more ready to step in and supply his wife's necessities. Not but that a man of Mr. Brady's temperament would have preferred anyhow to turn out of his home during these comfortless seasons.

Such flagrant conduct would naturally be hard for his wife to justify. However, she makes no attempt to do so. On the contrary, she is eloquent in her abuse of her husband. She forestalls the worst that her friends and advisers could say. "A walking beer-keg, *I* call him," she sniffed on one

occasion, enthusiastically denouncing him in his presence. Mr. Brady, who was playing with the baby at the time, was amiably deaf to all she said. He is not always so tame under insult, however, and it often comes to a fight between them, especially on Saturday nights. On one such Saturday night about two years ago, he had her arrested and she was sent to "the Island" (workhouse) for six months.

In short, Mr. Brady is a debonair type who manages to shirk his natural responsibilities without having to pay the usual penalties. Not only is his wife lenient with him, but he is also very popular with his children, who hang about him affectionately when he is at home, and compete for his attention.

Mrs. Brady, not nearly so easy-going as her husband, has certain standards of family life and complains because their circumstances are so miserable. She has been married twelve years and has worked regularly nine years of the time. She is a woman of robust physique in spite of all she has gone through, and has nursed all her children. But if her health has survived, her home and her children have suffered. "Katie and Mamie have most grown up in St. Joseph's nursery. Katie went there when she was seventeen days old," she said. But sometimes the effort to get them to the nursery is too great. At present, she leaves the three youngest alone in the apartment and "makes a race of it" twice a day besides the noon hour to see about them and nurse the five-months-old baby.

The apartment consists of three rooms in a rear tenement. The rent, $7.00 a month, is covered by Mrs. Brady's wages for one week as scrubwoman in a neighboring laundry. The flat is scantily furnished. A cot covered with quilts without mattresses or sheets, a couple of chairs always heaped with clothing, and a drop-leaf table are the only articles in the living room. Mrs. Brady, who lived out before her marriage and has since done domestic work by the day, has nevertheless no knack at home-making, besides

having no time for it. For a year she has been working from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m. When her baby was born she left off work only a week beforehand and returned when it was two weeks old. She tells the following story of that time to show her employer's good heart:

"I went to Mr. Mack in the office in the front of the laundry on Saturday night. I'd rather died than do it, but I was afraid not to give notice or maybe he wouldn't let me back. 'I've got to take a holiday,' says I. 'Have ye?' says he. Then he says, 'Come with me,' and he took me downstairs and gave me two sets of clean sheets and pillow cases."

The Blind Baker's Family

The Farrells are people who feel the disgrace of poverty more keenly than its physical afflictions. An almost abnormal dread of exposure has prevented their taking the most obvious steps toward obtaining relief or accepting ministrations which might at least have alleviated their distress. When things were at their worst for the Farrells,—the time when the investigator first became acquainted with them,—Mrs. Farrell used to regard any visitor as an intruder and suspect. A knock at her apartment would bring her out into the hall, where she would stand with her back to the door and parley at any length rather than expose the misery of her home to casual eyes. When finally one of the visitors, a district nurse, had penetrated to the bedside of Mr. Farrell, she was shocked at the condition of the invalid,—so much so that she said, bluntly, in the hearing of Annie, the ten-year-old daughter, that he was "starving as much as anything else." Mrs. Farrell knew she had done her best by her disabled husband and could not blame herself for his condition. It was not conscience which caused her to weep so bitterly when Annie told her what the nurse had said, nor a sense of the human tragedy in her husband's fate; it was simply the anguished humiliation of exposure.

Michael Farrell supported his family for twenty-four years before his health gave way. During this time seven children were born and four of them were buried—a record which means a serious financial strain on the family provider. However, Farrell was able to meet it. His wife always had a doctor for her confinement and there was insurance each time to bury the children. For a quarter of a century he paid his rent regularly, the family living all this time in the same house. His trade was that of a baker and for ten years he was foreman in a wellknown East Side bakery, earning $20 a week. At the age of forty-eight, he lost his eyesight after an operation for cataract. Following this came an attack of paralysis which left him a helpless invalid. For a year Farrell has not risen from his bed. Lying blind and helpless in his dark inner bedroom, he continues to be the household tyrant and to rule his family just as he did during the years when they looked to him alone for food and shelter.

Mrs. Farrell is about forty, a small, rather pretty woman, with a shy, nervous manner. Before her marriage, she was an expert lace cleaner and used to earn $10 a week. But she cannot return to that work now on account of her age and her poor eyesight. After visiting several French cleaning establishments, she gave up trying for this kind of work. "When they see you wearing glasses, they won't employ you," she said disconsolately. It is doubtless true that, even with glasses, Mrs. Farrell's vision is no longer keen enough for fine work.

In November, when the theatrical season opened, Mrs. Farrell at last secured a place. Two of her next-door neighbors had worked as cleaners in the Regent Theater for years. When, with the opening of the season, 16 new hands were wanted, they helped Mrs. Farrell secure a position there. As long as the season lasted—she never missed a day. Her hours were from 7:30 a. m. to 6 p. m. with an hour at noon. An hour was too short for her to go home in, so she took her lunch. On the two matinée afternoons of the week she went

home at 1 o'clock and returned to work at 4. On Sundays she worked from 7:30 a. m. to about 4 p. m. or "whenever they finished." At the end of the week she received $9.00.

Meanwhile, the care of the house and of the invalid fell to the seventeen-year-old boy and the ten-year-old daughter out of school hours. Mrs. Farrell and the oldest son brought in $15 a week between them.

Mrs. Farrell's supporting hope always had been that her son Edward would not have to quit school. He reached the second year of high school and had written an essay on chemistry for the high school magazine. He had dreams of going to college and his mother could rehearse the names of several eastern colleges that she had learned from him. Then, quite suddenly, the command went forth from the blind father in the sick room that Edward was to bring his books home and go to work. It lacked but two weeks till the end of the term and Edward and his mother begged hard that he might be allowed to complete it. But Mr. Farrell was not to be moved. Edward got a job driving on odd days for a spring water company.

At the close of the theater season Mrs. Farrell was dismissed. The oldest boy, who had been working as a stage hand, was thrown out about the same time. During the summer, Mrs. Farrell has had but one day's work in the week and the boys have had odd days' driving. Mrs. Farrell has a promise of a place when the opera season reopens, but that is still some months off. In the meantime the rent is beginning to fall behind and none of the family, including the invalid, has been sufficiently fed. They are badly off for clothes. Mrs. Farrell has been going out to look for work on the hottest July days wearing a black cloth jacket, because it was the only decent garment she had. When the baker succumbs, as he will shortly, his wife will receive a check for $413. The check will be given to the undertaker who, after taking out what is due him, will give the remainder back in cash. It will buy new clothes all round for the family and pay the

back rent. But Mrs. Farrell never speaks of the insurance, nor apparently do her thoughts dwell upon it.

One Family That Has Not Failed

From a farm region in a remote corner of Hungary, the home of the Gravats, the Grubinskys have found their way into a West Side tenement. The transition was not made all at once, but by gradual stages. Martin Grubinsky was the son, and his wife the daughter, of farmer people. The first break with farm life occurred when Martin went to work on the railroad. He had charge of a gang of men going over the railroads and making repairs on the tracks. He lost his awe of travel. With the railroad, one could reach the city of Vienna in six hours! Soon the couple shifted there. Mrs. Grubinsky went to work in a factory as a wool spinner and her husband continued on the railroad. After six years in Vienna, they were ready for America. Mary Grubinsky, with their four children, returned to her father's farm and Martin took the immigrant's way to America. In less than a year his wife followed, but the children stayed on the farm where bread and milk and fruit were abundant. Mrs. Grubinsky found her husband at work as a machinist in a Passaic mill and found employment there herself as a spinner. A year in the Passaic mills was followed by removal to New York and the West Side.

For seven years the Grubinskys have been West Siders. Mrs. Grubinsky cooked in a restaurant until her first "American" baby came. It was a little girl, whom she named "Annie." The baby was cherished like a first-born, for the other four children on the remote Hungarian farm seemed almost lost by this time. The mother's devotion to little Annie, however, did not prevent her from going out to do a day's work as often as she could get it. Martin Grubinsky was then earning but $7.00 a week.

Since coming to the West Side, he has worked for the same firm—a factory where furniture is made. He never misses a

day. If overtime is called for, Grubinsky jumps at the chance. If Sunday work is needed to fill a heavy order, he is the first man to report for it. If the firm gives out chair caning for home work, he sits over it all evening. His odd moments at home are rare, but they suffice for him to make a piece of furniture for his wife, to resole the children's shoes, or to patch a coffee pot for a neighbor. In this case, industry becomes almost a fault. "He would work all night," says his wife, with a shrug.

In seven years his wages have advanced from $7.00 to $11 a week. The increase came about once a year and amounted to 50 cents a week. But the Grubinsky family has also increased. Besides little Annie, three more "American" babies have been born. The children left in Hungary have begun to arrive one by one. Theresa, the eldest, came first. The second daughter soon followed. The family expenses have mounted with the advent of new babies and the arrival of the older children. One pays a friend or relative $20 for bringing a child from Hungary to New York, besides the passage money, which is also $20. The younger Grubinsky's have been brought into the world at much less cost, for their mother never had a doctor. The principal expense was her loss in wages.

There has never been any question in Mary Grubinsky's mind as to whether she should work. Her husband's uncommon industry and steadiness have brought him at the age of forty to where he is earning $11 a week with which to maintain a family of seven. Naturally, his wife must work. Besides, she has always worked. From the days when she toiled in her father's fields and went to service on a neighbor's farm, then later as a wool spinner in Vienna and Passaic, as cook in a restaurant, as charwoman by the day she has always worked, and worked to earn. As soon as each of her babies was a month old, she left it with a cousin and began to go out, securing a half day here, a whole day there, and gradually working up to an income of about $5.00 a week.

At home she is never idle. She helps her husband with the chair caning, makes the children's clothes, mends for her own family and also for hire, cooks, washes, irons, scrubs, tends her window boxes, minds the children of a neighbor who is doing a day's work, fetches ice from the brewery where it is thrown away, forages for kindling around warehouses, runs to the school when the teacher summons her—but a complete list of all that Mrs. Grubinsky does in the course of a week would be quite impossible. In her home, nothing is wasted, nothing lost. Even the feathers from a Thanksgiving turkey were made into cushions and dust brushes.

In short, Mrs. Grubinsky works as hard as her husband does. But she is by no means a spiritless drudge. She is enterprising and adaptable and takes the lead in Americanizing the family where Grubinsky lags behind. She collects green trading stamps diligently and has a clock secured with them. She never buys at the Eighth Avenue department stores, but always on Tenth Avenue where, as she says, rent is cheaper and prices are lower. But, she will tell you, it does not pay to buy things too cheaply. For instance, she paid a good price originally for her wash boiler, but has had it "since the last President was elected." She not only bought a sewing machine, which is common enough among the West Side women, but she learned how to use it, which is uncommon.

Two months ago she moved her family from a two-room into a three-room apartment, thereby raising the rent from seven to nine dollars. This was done in the face of Martin Grubinsky's flat command to the contrary. There are many things Martin Grubinsky does not know about America. How should he? All day long he works on chairs in the factory. Every evening he sits at home and weaves chair seats of cane. How should he know that an American family must have a sitting room besides a bedroom and kitchen, or that Tessie must have white shoes like the other girls when she goes to the church to be confirmed? In these

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A Slavic Mother and Her Five Reasons for Working

matters, Mary Grubinsky feels that she must decide and that Martin must accommodate himself.

In this home it is understood that some recreation is necessary. Neighbors drop in for a social evening, well-known neighbors who also came from Hungary. There are no less than seven families living in the same house who came from the same Hungarian district. In the Grubinsky kitchen they sit in a circle, husbands and wives together. Martin Grubinsky and his wife are each at work on cane weaving. The babies play on the floor in the middle of the circle. Perhaps a pail of mild beer is handed around once or twice, but not too often. The Grubinskys and their friends are temperate. Their men do not frequent saloons.

The yearly festivals are celebrated in turn. At Christmas, an evergreen springs up suddenly in the small sitting room, trimmed with the carefully hoarded tinsel from last year's festival. At Easter, Mrs. Grubinsky dyes some eggs and then Martin Grubinsky, with a sharp pointed knife, etches on them the most wonderful designs; for instance, a pair of wheels, two evergreen trees, and two hearts symmetrically placed. He has not forgotten how to do this, since he learned it long ago of the Croatian dwarf who used to etch the Easter eggs for the whole village.

Mrs. Grubinsky, true to her more American tastes, would like to go to a moving picture show occasionally with the children; but Grubinsky will not hear of that, and so she doesn't go. But on the day of the woman suffrage parade, she ran nearly all the way to Fifth Avenue to see the women pass by. One day she persuaded her husband to go with her and the children to Central Park to see the animals. Sometimes Theresa brings home a story book in German from the Children's Aid School, and her mother sits up late at night after the others are asleep and reads it. One book that Theresa brought was the history of Saint Genevieve. Mary Grubinsky sat up night after night reading in her slow, unpracticed way the simple German folk story. Sometimes, as

there was nobody to see her, she shed tears over the cruel misfortunes of the noble heroine. It seemed to her as if "it might have happened just like that in those other times." Martin Grubinsky cannot read and write. He once knew how, but has long since forgotten, which happens not uncommonly with working people.

The Grubinskys have ideals and hopes. These all center around the possession of a little farm in New Jersey. One day, when Mary Grubinsky's parents die, she will have a small remittance from Hungary. Then, too, the children will be working and Mrs. Grubinsky will be able to go out more days in the week. When they get together $600 they will move to a little place on the other side of the Hudson. In the meantime, it is a sustaining hope equally for the husband and the wife, and unites them through every other difference.

The Life of a Weaver

Mrs. Halbe lit the gas in the sitting room into which she had conducted the visitor, and indicated a seat on the sofa. She seated herself at the window through which the night outside appeared as a square of opaque blackness. Her dress was black, and as she told her story, sitting motionless in front of the window, her figure with its dark background appeared like some somber drawing by Albrecht Dürer, her countryman. On the center table was a large Bible and the unfinished stocking she was knitting for her adopted daughter.

"Yes," she began, folding her arms. "I am forty-five years old. I am standing at the loom twenty years. At Stolpin, in Saxony, I went to the village school and was called the brightest scholar in the class. I was given a medal for excellence in Christian doctrine.

"After coming to this country I had to try many ways before learning how to get on. I was at first maid-servant and cook, but at last I learned to be a weaver. Then I wrote to my mother that as my father was dead, she and my sister

should come out. For I had a good place then in a Brooklyn factory.

"But after they came, things did not go well. My sister could not adapt herself to the new conditions and would not work, so that I had to support the three of us. My mother would not learn the new customs and complained of them. I grew more and more discouraged, and my looks began to show my discouragement.

"Every day, on my way to work, I was passing a store where a big man would be always standing in front. I did not know his name nor did he know mine. But one day, seeing that I was looking so downhearted, he asked me what was wrong. I told him how it was,—that my mother and sister would not adapt themselves to the new conditions and help me as I had expected they would. He said that was not right. It would be better that I should marry him and leave them in the lurch. Then my sister would be compelled to go to work.

"This man was Halbe, my husband. He was twenty years older than I. But I thought it would be better to marry him than to go on in the old way. And Halbe, though he pretended that he did, and I believed him, did not care for me at all. As he saw me every day passing his door so regularly on my way to work, it came into his head that I would work as well for him as for my mother and sister.

"After we were married I went every day to the factory and he worked in the store. Soon we had put away $300. In those days I sometimes made as high as $12 or $13 a week.

"Then my husband got sick. He grew so bad that I saw he either had to go to a hospital or I must stay at home and nurse him. He said he would go to the hospital. He was too ill to walk, so I took a cab and we drove to the Bellevue Hospital. I said to the doctor, 'My husband is sick with rheumatism; can you take him in?' 'Certainly,' the doctor said, 'but I must examine him first.' But after he had examined him, he said, 'We cannot take him. Try the Roose-

velt Hospital.' Then we drove to the Roosevelt Hospital, but there they said, 'We do not take these cases. Try the New York Hospital.' When we got to the New York Hospital, they said to me, 'The only place for your husband is the Island.' By this time, though not one of the doctors had told me, I knew what was the matter with him.

"When he got back into the cab that last time he fell into the corner of the seat. As I stood on the sidewalk, he looked at me a long time without speaking. At last he said, 'Linda, for God's sake, don't send me to the Island.' Then I told the driver to take us home and got into the cab. He was sick all that winter. I had to give up my work and nurse him. In the spring when I went back to the factory, all our savings—more than $300—were gone. We moved out of the city to a place in New Jersey. Halbe got a place as traveling salesman and I went to the factory every day, so that we began to save money again.

"In a couple of years, we had got $400 in the bank. About that time Halbe began talking to me about adopting a baby. We had never had any children and I had made up my mind to do without, but he put it into my head. He said if I would adopt a young baby and stay at home and take care of it he would give me $11.50 every week instead of $9.00. The more I thought of it, the more I wanted to do it. It seemed to me as if it might be a good thing for Halbe to have the responsibility of a child. It might steady him. He was getting to drink a lot.

"Without saying a word beforehand, I went to the hospital one day and got the baby. She was just twenty hours old, and I carried her home in my arms. The only question I asked was, 'Is she healthy?' Halbe was surprised, but he was pleased at first. We christened the child Margaret for his mother. He had the baby's picture taken and carried it in his pocket, showing it to everybody. He told everywhere that he had adopted a child. But after awhile he got tired of her, and wanted me to take her back to the hospital. I did

not think it was right, and I told him it was our duty to keep her. He got so he would stay away from home for days. Then he would come back and say, 'I had to sleep out of the house four nights on account of that brat.' It went on like that until at last he went away altogether.

"The baby was nine months old. I took her in my arms and went to the station and bought a ticket to Denver where I had some friends. I had sold my furniture and had some money. In Denver they got me a place as a servant and I was well paid. In the fall I lost that place and when I tried to get another, the child was always a stumbling block. So I came back to New York. I landed at the station with just 10 cents in my pocket. But I knew my place at the factory was waiting for me. I bought some furniture on the instalment plan, and took these rooms.

"I wrote to Halbe and asked him to come to see me, but he did not come. The little one stayed with an Irish woman on the second floor and I paid her $2.00 a week. I was doing well at the factory, making $13 to $15 dollars a week.

"It was a small factory where I worked. Sometimes the warps would be out and the weaver would have to wait until others were ready, one or two days, as the case might be.

"One day when the warps were out, I went out to Glendale to see about boarding the baby there during the summer. I was riding along in the electric car and thinking about Margaret's education and how I could save her from the bad influences of the streets. If she told me she saw thus and so on the street, I would say, 'You have never seen our neighbor, Mr. Coles, do that, have you? Well, that is because he is good and the man on the street is bad.' I thought it would be better to send her to the Catholic school perhaps, though I am not a Catholic. The sisters would teach her some ideas of good and evil and the child must learn these things, and I would not have much time to teach her.

"I was so lost in thought I did not know when the car

started and stopped. Once I looked out of the window and said to myself, 'Why, the car isn't moving!'

"Just then I saw Halbe. He was walking on the platform. He came up to me and spoke to me as friendly as could be. I got out of the car. We talked together and presently he said, 'Have you got a dollar?' 'Yes, why?' 'Lend it to me. I want to treat you,' he said. He took me to a place where some of his friends were and we had coffee and kuchen. As we came away, I said, 'Why did you take me there? I did not want to see those people.'

"I thought he would come home with me and was happy at the thought. But he only wanted to show himself with me in the store, because some of the men had been unfriendly to him, on account of his leaving me and the baby. He wanted them to see him treating me well. It was a long time before he came near us.

"About a year ago he began to come to see us on Sunday afternoons. One day, as he sat there by the table reading a paper, Margaret came in and said to him, 'You are the man that wanted to chuck me when I was a little baby. Do you think that was right? A baby can't work. What would have become of me?' He turned red and said nothing. I do not know who told her that, but she is five years old and smart to remember.

"Now, I know he will not come back to us and will not help us. I must take care of Margaret by myself. My wages are not what they used to be. At the factory where I work, we are all women weavers. We get $1.00 the piece less than the men that work in the Charcot factory next door. Year before last I earned $700; last year I earned $550; this year so far,—and it is November now, you see,—I have earned only $400. They give us poor materials and expect us to make good silk out of it. But it is also true that at my age I cannot do the work as well as I once did. I am often tired and vexed in my mind and then I cannot work so well.

"Yes, I am a long time a weaver. I am standing at the loom twenty years."

A Family of Americans

Martin Crooks is one of thousands of teamsters who may be seen any day throning the high seat of a noisy truck and handling the reins of a powerful team of draft horses. He has been driving trucks for twenty-five years. At the age of fifteen he began to work for Hettenbach in Greenwich Street, and the next five years of his life were spent chiefly on the seat of one of Hettenbach's trucks. Then he went to work for a new "boss," and for fifteen years he was a regular driver at Cronin's establishment. After the teamsters' strike in 1908, Crooks found himself out of a job and it was three years before he got anything "regular" again.

During a few weeks of this time he worked for a company which was carting steel girders. Part of the time he drove four horses and then he got $18 a week; then he drove only two, for which he was paid $15 a week. Any one who saw him standing upon his truck with his load of steel girders and easily guiding the four huge horses would have thought that he looked like a tower of strength and the father of giants.

If one had followed him to his home, one would have found him living in a furnished room with the last remnant of his family—a small, forlorn little boy of eleven. It is hard to believe that an American boy of eleven could be quite so forlorn and frail as Martin Crooks, the younger. He is diffident and quiet by nature and sensitive about his appearance, which, since his mother's death, is truly beggarly. He sleeps with his father and during the day is left to the care of the neighbor women, whose kindness he returns by lending a hand with the younger children. When school is out he goes straight to the home of Mrs. Claffey, a neighbor, where he takes charge of the three little Claffeys while their mother gets supper for her husband. Though only eleven himself,

he had a grave, fatherly habit of addressing Jimmie Claffey as "son."

Martin served his apprenticeship as a nurse in his mother's home, for he was the oldest of five children. Martin's mother, as well as his father, was an American. Like her husband, she was born on the West Side, and spent the entire thirty-eight years of her life there. Like her husband, too, she followed the most obvious occupation thereabouts for her sex, and, again like him, she never changed her trade. As a little girl of thirteen, she went to work in a shirt laundry. There she stayed through slack and busy seasons for fourteen years. At the age of twenty-seven she married Martin Crooks and left the laundry to take care of her own home. The five children were born within the next nine years. Three of the little ones died in infancy, however, and Eddie, next to the youngest, only survived an attack of infantile paralysis to be left a hopeless cripple.

As soon as her husband got out of work in the strike year, Jennie Crooks went back to the laundry which welcomed her with open arms. She took her stand at the same ironing board where she had spent most of her girlhood and young womanhood. From under her patient, skilful hands an endless succession of beautiful, new shirt bosoms went forth to shine in the subdued lights of refined dinner tables. During the slack season in the summer she earned as low as $4.00 some weeks, but during the busy season, by working very hard, she could earn as high as $10.

In the meantime, Martin helped with the children at home, looked for work, and occasionally held down a job for a few weeks. This went on for three years and as the big teamster grew more accustomed to the situation he degenerated rapidly. He jealously guarded his authority at home, becoming very talkative and important before strangers.

His wife accepted the situation uncomplainingly for four years. Then in the spring she had to go to bed with a bad cold which the doctor thought "might get better if she took

care of herself." But immediately she got up again to do her family washing "because she couldn't stand seeing things around any longer."

As long as his mother lived, Martin had shared in the care of his little crippled brother. But after Mrs. Crooks' death, Eddie had to be sent to a "home." Then only the two Martins, father and son, were left, of what had once been a family of seven. The teamster is abroad all day and the little boy is left to spend his affections on the neighbors' children. He has been taken in hand by his school as a decided "malnutrition case" and is fed with milk and eggs several times during the day in addition to the school lunch. But the chances are that he will never grow to manhood.

How Mrs. Westrich Earned $11 a Week

When Mrs. Westrich went to work as an usher at the Jefferson Theater, she gave her name as "Miss Julia Westrich." She was a handsome, dark-browed woman, not much past thirty, who was always on time at her work and invariably presented the trim, smart appearance required of women ushers when on duty. The jaunty frilled apron, which was a feature of the uniform, and the equally jaunty crown of imitation curls which she wore helped to give her a youthful look in spite of her stern, unsmiling expression. She had very little to say, and soon gained a reputation among her fellow-workers for "minding her own business," which recommended her strongly to the work people on the premises.

There was one thing about "Miss Julia Westrich" which might have betrayed her to the other young lady ushers if the latter had been the least observant. That was the condition of her hands. "You'd think they'd give me away, wouldn't you?" Mrs. Westrich would say to a friend in her own kitchen, holding out her hands which bore the marks of the hardest kind of domestic labor.

Their condition was partly the result of the cooking, wash-

ing, and scrubbing they had done for her own family, partly of the coarse charring by the day they had done in other people's houses, but mainly of the second occupation which Mrs. Westrich was carrying. Besides her work at the theater, she was employed as cook for the saloon on the ground floor of her tenement. Her job was to prepare the "business men's lunch" served at noon and to get a "pan of beans" ready for the evening trade. The saloon was one of the more decent sort, and the proprietor a sober German who had befriended Mrs. Westrich in other ways besides giving her a job. He rented a small apartment on the second floor as a kitchen. Here Mrs. Westrich spent her mornings frying fish, boiling potatoes, washing dishes, keeping up the fire in the range—in short, doing all the work of cook and scullery maid incidental to preparing large quantities of food in a poorly equipped tenement kitchen. Mrs. Westrich often said that the work was "too laborious" and she thought she could better herself if she could "get time to look around."

But there was certainly little time left for looking around after she had done both her daily jobs. From 7 p. m. to 11 p. m. every evening, she must be at the theater. Then there were two or more matinée afternoons in the week when she was on duty from 1 p. m. to 5 p. m. Her cook's job occupied her every morning from 8 a. m. until 12. And after putting in a week of never less than fifty-six hours of wage-earning, she had her own flat to keep on the third floor of the tenement and three children to care for.

Her work at the theater paid $5.00 a week and her cook's place $6.00 a week. The total weekly income of $11 thus pieced together was none too liberally adapted to support herself and three children under fourteen. Part of the time it had supported a family of five. When she first began working as cook and as usher, her husband was still living at home, but drinking heavily and earning almost nothing. But one day he attacked his wife in a drunken frenzy and stabbed her, so that he was sent to prison for a term of two years.

Mrs. Westrich was soon about her work again, bearing six cruel scars across her shoulder and back. She had lost time from her work and had accumulated a doctor's bill of $25. A less indomitable nature would have appealed to charity. Indeed, offers of help came to her, but she refused them. In less than four months after her husband was sent to prison, she had paid the doctor's bill and had "caught up."

The cost of so much determination is to be found in the atmosphere of the Westrich home. The children do not measure up to their mother's standards, and she deals out reproaches freely. "Jessie learns to cook in the cooking school, but she don't cook up a cup of coffee at home." Jessie for her part is a vivid young person determined to have a good time. She takes every occasion to escape the depressing friction of her home and it is fortunate for her and her mother that an active, socialized church is waiting nearby with its girls' clubs to receive her.

CONCLUDING NOTE

Our study of this group of 370 West Side women completed, we cannot do better than recur to the questions which were uppermost in the minds of the workers when the investigation was begun. Why were these women wage-earners? How many of them worked because they must and how many for other reasons? There was one inevitable conclusion which resulted from the analysis of economic conditions in their homes. It was that not one of the mothers could afford not to earn. They had become wage-earners in obedience to the most primitive of maternal instincts. Their children would have suffered seriously had they failed or refused to earn. Small as were the

wages of their unskilled occupations, the amount, as we have seen, played an important part in a family budget correspondingly small. Moreover, they were found to be doing all their own housework before and after their wage-earning hours, instead of paying others to do it for them. By overworking themselves they made their earnings clear gain for their families.

Finally, it may be asked to what extent is the West Side mother of more than local significance. Is she, or is she not, a part of a much larger trend? When we consider the tremendous increase in recent years of the number of girls and unmarried women at work, we can scarcely doubt that the wife and mother has also felt the influence of the current. The swift translation of women from the home to the field of commercial employment is being felt in varying degrees by women everywhere. The compulsion to earn which the West Side mother has felt and obeyed is a far-reaching and significant one. It presents a problem of vital importance which demands the best efforts of social welfare workers for its solution.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CARDS AND OUTLINES USED IN INVESTIGATIONS

THE cards and outlines used in the study of families and individuals are here given to show the method of investigation followed.

The first card, No. 1, was filled out with the facts regarding nationality, religion, housing, composition of family, occupation, and wages of working members. This card bore the date of the first visit and represented the condition of the family on that particular day. It was thus a sort of cross-section of the family history.

It was soon found, however, that personal characteristics and aptitudes did not lend themselves to being recorded by checks and signs on the usual statistical cards. Hence outlines (A and B) were used for a fuller narrative statement of family and individual histories. These classified narratives contained a statement of the previous social history of the family and such other facts as budget health and family morale.

The family record was filled out in practically every case. The individual record was made out only for the person whose history was at that time under consideration in connection with a particular inquiry. For the young wage-earners of the family a special industrial card (No. 2) was used.

Card No. 1

1911 Approach Address Name

F. Yrs. Married

Birthplace Nationality Yrs in U.S. In N.Y. In Dist Religion and Church Lang. of Home

M.

Tent: No. Stories Ap'ts to Fl. No. Rooms No. Dark No. Illegally Dark Rent

Members House-hold	Name	Age	Employer			Kind of Work or School & Grade	Full Week's Earnings	Contribution to Family	Cas or Wks Unemplyd Past Year	Insur-ance	Social Agency
			Name	Nature of Business	Address						

Card No. 2

Date of Birth | Address | Name

School

Name	Age & Grade at Leaving	Age, beginning work	Empl. Certif. obtained

Night School

Name	Time Attended	Elem. or High

Business or Trade Training

Name of School	Length of Training	Courses Taken

No.	Dates	Yrs. and mns. empl.	Employer: Name	Employer: Address	Employer: Nature of Business	Kind of Work.	Weekly Earnings	Hours Daily	Hours Saturday	Overtime

OUTLINE FOR HOME VISITING

A. Family History:

1. *Social History of Family:*
   - Such items as reasons for moving to district.
   - Length of marriage, divorce, desertion, and irregular relations.
   - Deaths and misfortunes and their effects.
   - Criminal record of any member of family.
   - Affiliations with church, Sunday school, club, lodge, political party, benefit society, union, settlement, relief agency, or day nursery.

2. *Budget:*
   - Explanations and additions to face card items as to length of employment, interruptions to or temporary nature of employment, for chief wage-earners.
   - Other sources of income.
   - Insurance, savings.
   - Estimate income for year and indicate position of family according to Chapin standard.

3. *Health:*
   - Indications of tuberculosis, insanity, imbecility, alcoholism.
   - Medical care.

4. *Housing:*
   - Type, lighting, state of repair.
   - Arrangement of rooms and description of each room seen as to its light, order, cleanliness, and furnishings.
   - Insanitary features.

5. *Atmosphere of Home:*
   - General character of parents and other members of household.
   - Discipline in home, plans and ambitions for children (attitude toward schooling and occupation).
   - Good and bad influences in home.
   - Degree of assimilation in foreign-born families.

B. Individual History:

1. *Personal Characteristics:*
   Peculiarities and aptitudes; home relations (A-5 as applied to individual).

2. *Health:*
   Diseases, defects from birth, curvature, muscular nervousness, defective vision and teeth, anemia, nose breathing, mental defectiveness, skin eruptions, frequency of minor illnesses, strength and endurance, smoking.

   Treatment:
   Visits by school nurse, clinics, and so forth.

3. *Education:*
   Day nursery, kindergarten, or schools attended, age of entering, length of time attended, grade, standing, attendance, and age at leaving school. Manual or trade training. Value of educational influences. Child's attitude toward school, kindergarten, or day nursery.

4. *Recreation and Leisure* (that is, hours after school or after regular occupation):
   Companions, gangs.
   Street amusements: games, railroads, and wharves.
   Directed play: playgrounds, school athletics, settlement clubs, and so forth.
   Commercial agencies: theaters, dance halls, candy stores, and so forth.

5. *Industrial History:*
   a. First occupation, process, position, how secured, how long held, reason for changing. Same data for each subsequent position. Note advance and increasing efficiency or stationary value of labor. Effect on health, accidents. Industrial ambition and ideas of advancement.

b. Present occupation. Hours of work. Opening hour, closing hour, length of meal times. Variations in hours on different days of the week, if any. Sunday work. Overtime: days, week. Regularity of work, slack and busy seasons. Period of unemployment. Irregular employment.

Wages: System of payment, time or piece, piece rates. Total weekly earnings—minimum and maximum—for slack, busy, and normal seasons. Overtime pay: rate in relation to regular rate of pay. Provision of meals during busy season. Bonuses. System of opportuning. Any other method of adding to wages. Holidays with or without pay. Vacation with pay, if any.

c. Housekeeping: sewing, cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing.

To have filled out all the above cards and outlines after a single visit would obviously have been impossible. Our records were the result of a personal acquaintance that extended over a considerable period of time, often many months, and sometimes a year or more.

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